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FIFTY-TWO

SERMONS,

ON THE

BAPTISMAL COVENANT,

THE CREED,

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS,

AND OTHER IMPORTANT SUBJECTS OF

PRACTICAL RELIGION.

BEING

ONE FOR EACH SUNDAY IN THE YEAR.

BY SAMUEL WALKER, A.B.

FORMERLY OF EXETER COLLEGE, OXFORD, AND CURATE OF TRURO IN CORNWALL.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED, A

PREFACE,

Containing a Full and Authentic Account of the

AUTHOR'S LIFE AND MINISTRY.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

A NEW EDITION.

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M.DCC.LXXXIX.

THE

PREFACE,

CONTAINING AN ACCOUNT OF THE

AUTHOR's LIFE AND MINISTRY.

IN reading the Works of a man who hath been eminent in his profeſſion, if it be done out of a deſire of improvement, we are ſolicitous to inquire how he ſpent his private hours, and by what means he attained to his ſuperior degree of excellence. An inſight into the Life and Character of an Author, not only kindles in the ingenuous mind a laudable deſire of imitation, but alſo prepares it for the better reception of what he has to advance; and therefore may be conſidered in ſome ſort as a recommendation of the Work itſelf. This obſervation will perhaps hold good with regard to the compoſitions of the learned in other profeſſions; but muſt certainly be allowed to have the greateſt weight when applied to the writings of thoſe who have ſhewn the ſpirituality of GOD's Law, and have applied it cloſely to the conſcience in order to produce that conviction of ſin which alone can lead us to CHRIST. The ſtrictneſs of this divine Law the heart of man naturally riſes againſt, and deſires to ſhake it off as a yoke too heavy to be borne.

There never indeed appeared but one Perſon upon earth who might juſtly give the challenge, *Which of you convinceth me of ſin?* and who could appeal to the great

Searcher of hearts, *As I came into the world to do thy will, so have I kept thy sayings.* All others, CHRIST only excepted, have need to smite their breasts, and to cry out with the Publican, *God, be merciful to me a sinner.*

But though through the degeneracy and impotence of our fallen nature we are rendered incapable of performing a perfect and unsinning obedience to the divine will; yet, when we are convinced that men *of like passions* with ourselves have been made more than conquerors over their inbred corruptions, have brought forth their *fruit unto holiness* in a life uniformly dedicated to the glory of GOD and the good of their brethren, and have at last finished the course of this their mortal life with a hope full of immortality; we can no longer have any doubt concerning the reality and efficacy of a saving change wrought in their temper and conduct, how difficult soever it may appear to flesh and blood. And it remains only that we walk in the same steps which they trod, that we may be made partakers of the same precious promises.

The force of example is known to be much more powerful than that of precept. Those who are Christians, not in *name* and outward *profession* only, but *in spirit and in truth*, are set forth as so many lights in a dark and benighted world. They are commanded to *let their light so shine before men that they may see their good works, and glorify their Father which is in heaven.* They *are the salt of the earth*; and they are directed so to season their speech, that it may *minister grace unto the hearers.* Such is the Life of a real Christian upon earth: and his Writings after his decease may be regarded as the sayings of him who *being dead yet speaketh.*

I would not wish to prepossess the mind of the Reader with any undue bias in favour of the Author of the following Discourses. Let the matter contained in them be

be carefully examined by the teſt of the written word. Let the Facts now to be recorded in a ſhort ſketch of his Life, ſhew that what he taught in public he lived in private, and let them teſtify that his miniſterial labours were not confined to the pulpit, but that he diligently uſed every other method which ſeemed likely to promote the ſalvation of his flock. All that I would requeſt of the Reader is, that in comparing the Author's ſentiments with the ſacred Oracles, he would beg of the Father of ſpirits to give him a ſingle eye and an humble heart, and to enable him clearly to diſcern and affectionately to embrace *the truth as it is in Jeſus.*

Humility and ſincerity of mind is the only ſoil wherein the ſeed of the word will grow up unto eternal life; and the Bible is the only book from which we can learn to ſeparate the wheat from the chaff.

Thoſe of the Clergy into whoſe hands theſe ſheets may fall will excuſe my importunity, if I beſpeak their more careful attention in reviewing the Life and Writings of Mr. Walker: though neither eminence of ſtation in the world, nor rare and uncommon attainments in human literature, will excite their admiration; for he lived and died a *Curate*; and though he was no way deficient in any branch of learning pertaining to his profeſſion, yet he was engaged in too active and buſy a ſcene of life to have leiſure to acquire that extent and depth of erudition, which many men of leſs employment without ſuperior abilities have attained to. But they will find in him excellencies of another kind, not leſs worthy of their regard; they will here contemplate the Life and Doctrines of one poſſeſſed in an eminent degree of the knowledge, ſpirit, and zeal of a primitive Chriſtian Teacher; of one who, though *poor in this world*, was *rich in faith and good*

works; of one, who had learned to *esteem the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt.*

I humbly call upon you, Reverend Brethren, who have taken upon you the solemn and important office of the Ministry, to observe with what diligence and earnest concern for the salvation of the souls of men he laboured faithfully to fulfil the duties of his function. I beseech you to consider with calm and unprejudiced minds, as a matter of the utmost importance to yourselves, whether his sentiments were not exactly agreeable to the revealed word of GOD; and his conduct in all things conformed to the examples of faith and patience therein recorded for our instruction and imitation. If upon a cool and dispassionate examination, you see reason to conclude that they were, let me earnestly intreat you to *be followers of him as he also was of Christ.* If such a conduct should expose you, as it did him, to reproaches and sufferings, contempt and ridicule, not only from the more openly careless and profligate, but even from some, who though they maintain a decent *form of godliness*, are nevertheless unhappy strangers to the life and *power thereof*; you will with him remember, that *he who spake as never man spake, was despised and rejected of men*; and take consolation from these encouraging words of your blessed Master, who declared to his disciples that they would have great cause to *rejoice and be exceeding glad*, when men should *revile them and persecute them, and say all manner of evil of them falsly, for his and his gospel's sake.* If, with him, you *endure hardness like good soldiers of Jesus Christ, not rendring evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrariwise blessing*; if you are nothing moved by whatever trials may assault you, from the steady and uninterrupted pursuit of your own salvation, and that of those who hear you, you will also doubtless with him be made abundant partakers of the rich consolations that are in CHRIST, to sweeten your passage

ſage through this vale of ſin and ſorrow: you will triumph, as he did, in the immediate proſpect of approaching diſſolution, and at laſt enter into the poſſeſſion of that glorious inheritance, wherein he is now praiſing the Lord for his grace and mercy, and exulting in the fruition of eternal bliſs.

I will now enter upon the taſk aſſigned to me of drawing up from authentic Memorials a ſuccinct account of the Life and Miniſtry of the Author of the following Diſcourſes.

Our Author, SAMUEL WALKER, was the youngeſt of ſeven children; he was born at *Exeter*, on the 16th day of *December*, in the year of our Lord 1714. His Parents were Robert Walker, of the City of *Exeter*, Eſq; and Margaret his Wife, who was the only Daughter of the Reverend Mr. Richard Hall, Miniſter of St. *Edmund*'s and *Allhallows* in that City.

Robert Walker, the Father of Mr. Samuel Walker, was the only Son of Sir Thomas Walker, Knight, who, as his Anceſtors had done, repreſented the City of *Exeter* in many ſucceſſive Parliaments during the reigns of King Charles I. and King Charles II. Sir Thomas's Lady was Mary, the only Daughter of the Reverend Samuel Hall, A. M. youngeſt Son of Dr. Joſeph Hall, Biſhop of *Exeter*.

Thus was our Author lineally deſcended from that pious, learned, evangelical, and truly Chriſtian Prelate, to whom he ſeemed to have been allied not only by proximity of blood, but likewiſe by affinity and ſimilarity of ſentiment; as well as by a yet nobler relationſhip in grace, by being united, as a living Member of the ſame myſtical Body, to the ſame glorious and exalted Head, CHRIST JESUS.

Mr. Samuel Walker, having lived under the care of his Parents till he was Eight years of age, was then put to the Grammar-School in *Exeter*, where he continued till he

was Eighteen; when he was sent to *Exeter College* in the University of *Oxford*, and put under the care of the present Rector of that Society, Dr. Francis Webber.

Having taken the degree of *Batchelor of Arts* in the year 1737, he was ordained the latter end of that year, and appointed to the Curacy of *Dodescomb-Leigh*, in the neighbourhood of *Exeter*, where he continued till *August* 1738. He was prevailed upon by the late Lord Rolle to undertake the charge of his youngest Brother's education, and to make the Tour of *France* with him; where Mr. Walker acquired many of those polite accomplishments which adorn the Gentleman.

About two years after he returned to *England*, and accepted of the Curacy of *Lanlivery*, in the County of *Cornwal*, under the Reverend Nicholas Kendall, A. M. one of the Canons of *Exeter*, and Archdeacon of *Totness*. On the death of Mr. Kendall, *March* 3, 1740, he was presented by Walter Kendall, Esq; to the said Vicarage, to hold the same during the Minority of a Nephew of Mr. Kendall, to whom, upon his coming of age, Mr. Walker resigned it, and at *Midsummer*, 1746, entered upon the Curacy of *Truro* in *Cornwal*.

Mr. Walker, during the six years he served *Lanlivery*, was always much esteemed for the decency and regularity of his conduct; having been by a gracious Providence preserved from all gross vices. His Conscience, even at that time, dictated to him the necessity of constant diligence in the public duties of Preaching and Catechising; though he was then unacquainted with those evangelical principles which he afterwards embraced, and taught with so much success in the latter years of his ministry. Nor did he, destitute as he was of the light and motives which influenced his after conduct, neglect at any season to visit his parishioners, and give them the best counsel and advice

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he was able. A remarkable inſtance of his concern for them ſtands upon record in one of his papers. In the year 1744, being ſeized with a violent fever, he ſent to a neighbouring Gentleman, and dictated to him a letter, which, in caſe of his death, he deſired might be tranſcribed and given to ſuch of his Pariſhioners, as he found neither his preaching nor his private admonitions had wrought any good effect upon, whoſe names he then deſired the Gentleman to take down; which is an evidence of his concern for the ſouls of thoſe under his care.

But before we proceed farther, it may not be amiſs to ſay ſomething concerning Mr. Walker's endowments both in Body and Mind. As to his perſon, he was tall in ſtature, his features were ſtrong and comely, and his deportment ſuch as commanded reſpect. An air of authority, which was natural to him, uſually ſtruck an impreſſion of awe, at the firſt interview, upon thoſe that converſed with him: but yet he conducted himſelf in ſuch a manner, that whilſt with a becoming dignity he extorted, even from the froward and petulant, a reſpect due to the miniſterial character, by his affability and readineſs either in communicating his own thoughts, or attending to what was ſaid by others, he rendered himſelf an agreeable companion to thoſe who were willing either to impart or to receive inſtruction.

In his converſation he diſcovered an uncommon depth of thought, and delivered his ſentiments with readineſs of expreſſion on any ſubject. His underſtanding was remarkably clear, and continued ſo to the very laſt. He was poſſeſſed of a quick apprehenſion, a ſolid judgment, and a retentive memory. The faculty which appeared in a more diſtinguiſhing manner was his methodical exactneſs and propriety in the arrangement of his thoughts, and the diſtribution of the ſeveral parts of the ſubject he

undertook to elucidate. This is to be diſcerned throughout his writings. And when his friends have obſerved to him that he uſually diſcovered great accuracy and propriety in dividing the matter of his Diſcourſes, he was wont at ſuch times to ſay, that Logic had been a favourite ſtudy with him from his youth. And indeed he generally took an opportunity of recommending an improvement in the art of Logic to younger Divines, who conſulted him upon the proſecution of their ſtudies. He cautioned them to beware of quoting ſcraps of Scripture, as they ſtand by themſelves, and building opinions thereon which the context would not authoriſe. In oppoſition to this ſlothful cuſtom, he adviſed them to conſider each paſſage with reference to what went before and what followed after; and likewiſe to mark with attention what analogy it bore to the general plan of Salvation by Grace. This circumſtance might perhaps with more propriety have been reſerved to be mentioned hereafter; but as I was ſpeaking of his intellectual endowments, it naturally occurred to me in this place.

But to return: Our Author, as it was mentioned, quitted *Lanlivery*, and ſettled at *Truro* in the year 1746; at which time he was univerſally eſteemed not only in his private character, but likewiſe for the regular diſcharge of the duties of his Paſtoral Function.

Some of my Readers may perhaps aſk, "If Mr. Walker bore ſo reſpectable a character at his firſt coming to *Truro*; what occaſion had he either to make any alteration in his principles, or to new-model his conduct?" I will therefore endeavour to give an anſwer to this queſtion, which concerns a moſt important criſis in his life, in as clear and ſatisfactory a manner as I am able.

It is hardly to be ſuppoſed that a man of his ſtrong ſenſe and ſolidity of judgment ſhould be induced to differ

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ſo intirely from his former ſelf, if he had not ſeen ſufficient ground to believe that he had been totally miſtaken. There never was a man leſs likely to be deceived by any enthuſiaſtic impreſſions, of which he was always ſo jealous, that it was his conſtant rule to watch over the reaſonings of his own mind, to compare all its concluſions with the plain ſenſe of Scripture, and to lay no ſtreſs on any thing that was not warranted by an agreement with that unerring Rule. Thus was he guarded againſt the deluſive ſallies of a lively imagination; neither was he more likely to be miſled by a deference to the authority of others, whatever his opinion or eſteem of them might be; but what he ſaw for himſelf required in the word of GOD, as matter of faith or practice, that and that only he thought himſelf bound to believe and do. And he was ſo much afraid of leading others into that blind ſubmiſſion to his judgment, which he would not pay himſelf to any human authority, that he made it always a part of his advice to thoſe whom he inſtructed, not to give their aſſent to any thing he ſhould tell them, becauſe he ſaid it; but to go to their Bible, and to ſearch the Scriptures, that their faith might not be built upon man's authority, but only upon divine teſtimony. It was not therefore without reaſon that he ſubmitted to a change, which aroſe from the moſt deliberate and well-grounded conviction.

Did Religion require nothing more than external decency of manners, it muſt certainly be allowed that he was under no neceſſity of Reformation. But to make the neceſſity of ſuch a change a little more intelligible to thoſe of my Readers, who may have hitherto neglected to conſult the intereſts, and attend to the concerns of their own immortal ſouls, I muſt take leave to remind them, that there is an eſſential and very important difference between the external Profeſſor of Chriſtianity and

the real internal Chriſtian: That to depend upon regularity in obſerving the outward modes of worſhip, upon acts of benevolence and kindneſs, upon abſtaining from groſs injuſtice and ſcandalous vices; that, in ſhort, to appear outwardly blameleſs unto men, to make *a fair ſhew in the fleſh*, and thereby to ſtifle and appeaſe the admonitions and accuſations of conſcience, which was juſt our author's former caſe, is the utmoſt height of the religion of thoſe, who take up with the *form of godlineſs void of the power thereof*; but that the real Chriſtian, without being leſs careful to *walk worthy of the vocation wherewith he is called*, and to adorn his profeſſion by the practice of every thing that is amiable and praiſe-worthy, is farther taught to look carefully to the ſtate of his heart and affections, and to examine the principles which actuate his conduct. He is filled with an habitual and earneſt deſire to be conformed, in the inward temper and diſpoſition of his ſoul, to the image of him *who bare our ſins in his own body on the tree, that all who believe in him might not periſh, but have eternal life*. He ſtrives to mortify all the corrupt inclinations, both of the fleſh and of the mind; to renounce his own will in every inſtance where it riſes in any degree of oppoſition to that of GOD; to be valiant in the cauſe of GOD and his truth; and reſolute in bearing, with meekneſs and patience, the troubles he will unavoidably meet with for conſcience ſake: ſuch, and ſo different from his former ſelf, was our Author after this important change had taken place in him.

If the reader is ſenſible of the difference, which I have faintly endeavoured to repreſent between the *real* and *nominal* Chriſtian, he will ſee the neceſſity of ſuch a change; and his queſtion will be anſwered to his ſatisfaction.

I beg

I beg leave, however, to add a few words more, now I am upon this ſubject.

As Chriſtians we are commanded to regulate all our actions with a ſingle eye to the glory of GOD, and to the good of mankind. But neither the one nor the other of theſe motives appear to have any ſway over our hearts, as long as our religion is confined merely to the obſervance of external performances. On the contrary, a ſelfiſh, earthly, and ſenſual diſpoſition, cloked under a maſk of godlineſs, ſeems to direct the whole bent of our inclinations, while we ſerve God, not out of a principle of love, but of ſlaviſh fear; and while our affection to our neighbour knows not more extenſive bounds than that of publicans and ſinners, in *loving thoſe only that love us*. Pride itſelf will often put us upon doing many duties which will make us appear *outwardly* righteous to men; and fear of ſhame, of injuring our worldly intereſt, or other temporary conſiderations, will reſtrain us from the actual commiſſion of many ſins to which our hearts are ſtrongly inclined. It is one thing to perform an outward work of righteouſneſs, it is another to perform that work out of a pure diſintereſted view to the glory of GOD: The natural man, who propoſeth no other end but ſelf-gratification in ſome ſhape or other, will counterfeit many acts of piety; but it is the privilege of the new-born Chriſtian alone to aim ſingly at the glory of GOD from a motive of real love to him, ariſing out of a ſenſe of his *having firſt loved us*. Where the *fruits* of holineſs are regularly and conſtantly brought forth, there we are obliged in charity to ſuppoſe that the *tree is good*, and that they ſpring from a living principle in the heart. But where this uniformity of conduct is wanting, and religion dares to ſhew itſelf no farther than is conſiſtent with the favour of the world, and cautiouſly declines the *taking*

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up of the croſs; there, notwithſtanding many things may be diſcerned which *are lovely and of good report*, yet, when the ſtate of ſuch a man's heart is ſearched to the bottom, it is very probable *that which is highly eſteemed among men*, will be found to be an *abomination in the ſight of God*.

The woe denounced by our Saviour againſt the Scribes and Phariſees is equally applicable to the formal Profeſſors of this and every age.—*Ye are like unto whited ſepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead mens bones and of all uncleanneſs. For in Chriſt Jeſus neither circumciſion availeth any thing nor uncircumciſion, but a new creature.* And unleſs the Image of GOD which we loſt by the fall of our firſt parents, be reſtored by an entire renovation wrought in the ſpirit of of our minds, whatever our outward carriage may be, we ſtill remain natural men, *dead in treſpaſſes and ſins*. This our author found to be the caſe with himſelf.

It was not owing, as we have ſhewn, to any ſudden flight of his own imagination, nor to his being led away by the influence of others, that he altered his manner of thinking, preaching and living, but to a deep and ſolid conviction, founded upon expreſs teſtimony of ſcripture, that he had hitherto acted altogether upon wrong principles, by which he ſaw the neceſſity of *putting off the old man, and putting on the new*. His beſt deeds, he found, were full of ſin in themſelves, and the reſult of bad or miſtaken motives. His heart being laid open to him by the word of GOD, he diſcovered in himſelf an abſence of every thing ſpiritually good, and a propenſity to what is evil. It became plain to him that a corrupted nature lying at the bottom of thoſe very actions which had gained him the applauſe of men, had defiled and rendered them blame-worthy in the ſight of GOD.

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The occaſion of his being brought to this knowledge of himſelf was as follows. About a year after he came to *Truro*, being in company with ſome friends, the ſubject of whoſe converſation turned upon the nature of juſtifying and ſaving Faith, he, as he freely owned afterwards, became ſenſible that he was totally unacquainted with that faith which had been the topic of the diſcourſe, and alſo convinced that he was deſtitute of ſomething, which was of the greateſt importance to his own as well as to the ſalvation of the people committed to his charge. He ſaid nothing at that time of the concern he was brought under to any one of the company, but was ever afterwards, as opportunity offered, ready to enter upon the ſubject. He began to diſcover that he had hitherto been ignorant of the nature of Goſpel-ſalvation, inattentive to the ſpiritual ſtate of his own ſoul and the ſouls of others, and governed in all his conduct not by the only chriſtian motives of love to GOD and man, but purely by ſuch as were wholly ſenſual and ſelfiſh; he found that he was a ſlave to the deſire of man's eſteem; and in ſhort, as he himſelf expreſſed it, that all had been *wrong* both within and without.

Upon this diſcovery he applied himſelf with diligence and fervent prayer to the ſtudy of the holy Scriptures, and having by theſe means gained a farther inſight into the nature of man's ſpiritual diſorder, and of the remedy afforded in the Goſpel, this neceſſarily led him to make a conſiderable alteration in his preaching, both as to the choice of his ſubjects and the manner of his addreſs. Convinced that the divine teſtimony was the only ſure ground of a divine faith, he was careful to aſſert nothing that was not immediately drawn from the word of GOD, it being now his great aim and ſtudy, to uſe his own phraſe, to be a good Bible Divine.

But

But of all these particulars the reader will gain a clearer knowledge from the following Meditation, written by him at his return from a meeting of neighbouring Clergymen, who met together for the purpose of religious conversation.

" Seeing the Gospel-revelation is a dispensation of Grace; a remedy for a fallen creature; we must needs be sensible of those effects which the fall hath had on us, ere we can make a right use of the Gospel.

" For my own part, I lived many years in an entire ignorance of a corrupted nature; although I had learnt to reason in a speculative and historical way upon man's degeneracy. Since it hath pleased GOD in some measure to enlighten the eyes of my understanding, I look back upon those days of blindness, and plainly see that while I kept to an external customary decency, and in some sense regularity, I was influenced by and acted upon two hidden principles, as contrary to GOD as darkness is to light; *the one*, a prevailing desire of reputation and being esteemed, which went through all I did, followed me into all companies, dictated all I said, led me to compliance often in direct opposition to conscience, made me above all things fearful of being thought little of, directed all my sermons both in writing and in speaking them, and in short swayed my whole life, till, I hope, the few latter years of it: *the other*, a desire of pleasure, which rendered me slothful, indolent and restless out of company, eager after amusements, *&c.* but this was so subordinate to the other, that I was always best delighted with such entertainments as gave me opportunity of setting off any excellence I might seem to have; such as music and dancing. By these two the *strong man* kept the *palace* of my heart, and all was peace; and that in so strange a manner, that I do not recollect the least suspicion

picion of my being out of the way, for I had learned to reſt upon my freedom from the groſſeſt vices, and keeping a ſort of ſtrictneſs in attending upon the forms of my miniſtry, and eſpecially in engaging others to attend them.

" Were I to ſay with how many heart-felt pangs of fear and diſquietude I have been brought during theſe latter years to any reaſonable meaſure of indifference about the eſteem of the world, I ſhould deſcribe the paſſages which have moſt ingroſſed my mind. The love of pleaſure decayed firſt: but yet I could only part with it by degrees: and many things of that ſort I continued in, when I had no pleaſure in them, becauſe I was aſhamed to leave them."

In a letter from a Clergyman concerning the firſt queſtion in the Office for the ordaining of Deacons, publiſhed in 1758, Mr. Walker ſays of himſelf,

" As I was ignorant of the Salvation that is in CHRIST JESUS, and of my want of him in all his offices, ſo I had not taken the leaſt notice of the ſpiritual ſtate of others. It was to me as a thing I had no concern with, that ſins of the groſſeſt kind were committed on every ſide of me. And after I was ordained, I had no ſight or thought of the condition my Pariſhioners were in, though I had ſome deſire that they ſhould come to Church and Sacrament, and not drink, ſwear, and the like."

But the whole of this matter is explained more at large in a letter written by him in the year 1753 to a friend in *London*, wherein he gives a particular account of his Miniſtry at *Truro* from the very beginning.

" In the year 1746 I undertook (as *Curate*) the charge of this populous and large Town, in many reſpects the principal Town in the County. GOD knows upon what unworthy views I did it, and how utterly diſqualified

lified my heart and head were for my miniſterial truſt. I had been then ſome years Vicar of a neighbouring Pariſh. But, dear Sir, how muſt I have ſuffered the poor ſouls there to ſtarve and periſh, while I was only poſſeſſed of hiſtorical notions of all the vitals of Chriſtianity; *the corruption of man's nature, his miſery and helpleſſneſs*; *the ſatisfaction and ſufficiency of Chriſt*; *the neceſſity of a renewed mind*; *the need of the work of the Spirit:* Theſe I knew notionally, but neither felt nor taught them practically. You muſt own I ought to go ſorrowing to the grave upon a review of ſix years ſo paſſed over. Nevertheleſs I was thought well of and indeed eſteemed beyond moſt of my Brethren for my Regularity, Decency, Endeavours to keep up external attendances, and ſomewhat or other in my Public Addreſſes. Would to GOD I were the only one intruſted with the Goſpel in theſe circumſtances. It was at leaſt a year after the kind Providence of GOD brought me hither, ere I fell under conſiderable ſuſpicions or uneaſineſs about myſelf and my manner of preaching; when by the frequent converſation of a Chriſtian Friend (verily the firſt perſon I had met with truly poſſeſſed of the mind of CHRIST) I became ſenſible all was wrong within and without. My uneaſineſs was rather abiding than violent, poſſibly becauſe my life had been free of groſs ſins, having been uſed in a good meaſure to follow the direction of my Conſcience, and the change wrought upon me was ſlow, till under "a variety of means I was brought to *the knowledge of the Truth as it is in Chriſt Jeſus.*"

In the beginning of the above account our Author reflects with concern upon the *unworthy views* which prevailed upon him to undertake the Curacy of *Truro*. In order to acquaint the curious Reader what theſe *unworthy views* were, I ſhall here interrupt the narrative to inform him, that in many private converſations he often told me, that

that he was not actuated by the leaſt meaſure of a *miniſterial ſpirit* at the time of his firſt coming to *Truro*; but that his only motive in going to live in that populous Town, in preference to any other place in the County, was the greater reſort of company, and that he might take his pleaſure at the *Aſſemblies, and particularly in dancing*. Such was the bent of his inclinations before he was *partaker of the Grace of God in truth*. He was naturally a *lover of pleaſure more than a lover of God*.

The Letter goes on:—" As this work was going forward in myſelf, the people were made partakers of the effects of it; by and by I began to deal with them as loſt ſinners, and beat down formality and ſelf-righteouſneſs, and to preach CHRIST. The fruit of this, by the mighty working of the Spirit, quickly appeared. It was a new way to them. They were ſurpriſed and grew angry, not without an evident fear reſting upon them, and an intereſting curioſity to hear me again of this matter. I have reaſon to judge that almoſt all of them have been one time or other awakened more or leſs, although I fear many of them have *rejected the counſel of God againſt themſelves*. But in the mean time, ſome more ſenſibly *pricked in their hearts*, came to me inquiring *what they muſt do?* The number of theſe continually increaſing, I thought my utmoſt diligence was needful towards them. They were univerſally ignorant in the groſſeſt degree. I was glad to give them as many evenings in the week as I could ſpare, appointing them to attend me after their work was over, at my houſe. As there was no knowledge of divine things amongſt them, and in conſequence thereof they were incapable of inſtructing one another; and withal, as they were marked out by reproach, and had every art tried upon them to draw them away, they needed from me both inſtructions and cautions, which I was obliged for theſe

reaſons

reaſons to give them, either ſingly, or by two or three together. This I have continued to do to the preſent time, with no other variation, but that of uſing the help of thoſe who had made any progreſs, to watch over beginners.

" I had from the firſt engaged them frequently to converſe together, and pray with one another, as I could put them together; and though the far greater part of them fell away from their awakenings, yet when a number of them ſeemed to be ſomewhat confirmed, they of their own accord met together in larger bodies in their own houſes, to read GOD's word, pray, ſing Pſalms, *&c.* This became pretty much practiſed about two years ago, and herein I have left them to themſelves, only giving them directions as need required.

" By the Grace of GOD, the number of thoſe, whoſe conduct ſeemed to expreſs a lively faith, began now to be ſomething conſiderable, for which reaſon about the latter end of laſt Summer it was thought adviſeable to form them into a religious Society, which after ſome delays was effected in the beginning of *February*. The number of Members is now upwards of ſeventy. [It was afterwards conſiderably increaſed.]

" While I was deliberating about this Society, which was to conſiſt of ſuch only as gave hopes of an edifying example, it was thought proper to call together as many others as were willing, in my houſe once a week, as a ſort of nurſery for the principal Society: and by talking and praying with them, we ſeem to have found ſome eſtabliſhment among thoſe who are weaker.

" This hath been the progreſs of the work among ourſelves, wherein I have reaſon to believe, we have been much forwarded by the bleſſing of the Spirit upon a free and practical Expoſition of *the Church Catechiſm*, which

which I have, after my poor meaſure, made by word of mouth, the *Sunday*-Evenings of half the year, an hour after ſervice.

" I have to add farther, as that which I doubt not will give you pleaſure, that not long after the commencement of this work at *Truro*, ſeveral Clergymen of us in the neighbourhood aſſociated ourſelves under the name of the *Parſons Club*, for mutual conſultation and direction in order to promote the great end of our miniſtry."

In this letter Mr. Walker makes mention of two *Societies*, the *one*, of the more ſerious people of the town of *Truro*; the *other*, of ſome of the neighbouring Clergymen. Concerning each of theſe it will not, I preſume, be diſagreeable to the reader, to hear ſomewhat more particularly; and it will be equally pleaſing to me to lay before him the nature and deſign of theſe religious meetings, and the rules which each member was obliged to conform to; as I am in hopes, that by theſe means I may not only vindicate them from the imputation of being anywiſe offenſive or contrary to the good order and diſcipline of the Church, but alſo ſhew forth their utility.

The former *Society*, conſiſting of the more ſerious part of Mr. Walker's congregation at *Truro* was divided into two claſſes, one of men, into which no woman could be admitted: another of married men, their wives, and other women, into which no unmarried man could be admitted. Each claſs meets every other week alternately. In drawing up the rules for the government of this Society, Mr. Walker chiefly followed the plan laid down by the Rev. Dr. Joſiah Woodward, in his treatiſe written in Queen Anne's time, under the title of *An Account of the Riſe and Progreſs of the Religious Societies in and about London, and of their endeavours for the Reformation of Manners.*

Manners. Which little book our author diſperſed amongſt his people at *Truro* at the time of their firſt aſſembling in this manner, purpoſely to remove every ground of prejudice, becauſe in this tract the moſt conſiderable objections againſt religious ſocieties are fully anſwered.

The whole proceedings of this ſociety are as follow.

Conſiderations laid before the Members of the Society, being the ſubſtance of the firſt charge or exhortation, ſpoken at its opening, by the Director.

BRETHREN, You expect that I lay before you the deſign of this Society, and give you ſome cautions concerning it. The deſign is threefold: 1. To glorify GOD. 2. To be quickened and confirmed ourſelves. 3. To render us more uſeful among our neighbours.

I. "As a Society, we ſhall be better able to glorify GOD; for hereby we bear a more evident teſtimony to the cauſe of CHRIST, and make a more avowed confeſſion of him and his words in theſe evil days, than we could do when ſeparate.

"Every one of you deſires that the kingdom of JESUS CHRIST were more eſtabliſhed, and more honourable in the world than it is, and you join your hand with others to promote ſo deſirable an end.

"Take theſe cautions for this purpoſe:

"1. Look upon yourſelf as one aſſociated with others in vindication of your Maſter's honour.

"2. Never be aſhamed of him or his doctrine, or of this Society.

"3. Demean yourſelf to every one as his diſciple, by walking in humility, meekneſs, heavenly-mindedneſs and charity, after CHRIST's example.

"4. Keep yourſelf heedfully from all things which may diſgrace your Maſter and this Society; ſuch as pride in

in a conceit of your knowledge or attainments, or that you are a member of this Society.—Valuing yourſelf upon any diſtinction in ſtation or wealth.—Sinking into a worldly frame,—or declining into ſloth and idleneſs.—Practiſing the leaſt diſhoneſty, or conniving at the diſhoneſty of others.—Making compliances to avoid ſhame or to promote worldly intereſt.—Falling into lukewarmneſs and forgetting your firſt love.—Slighting public ordinances.

" 5. Often, eſpecially before and after great trials, reflect that you belong to a religious Society for promoting the glory of CHRIST.

" II. The ſecond deſign of this Society is to be quickened and confirmed ourſelves. For hereby we ſhall be better able to maintain the war againſt our enemies, eſpecially againſt the world, and to grow in grace; ſeeing in this aſſociation we may expect the Spirit to bleſs our exerciſes:—ſhall have the benefit of mutual advice and reproof:—ſhall be more hardy to oppoſe the temptations beſetting us in this wicked world:—ſhall walk under a peculiar reſtraint, as being members of a religious Society.—And ſhall be aſſiſted by the prayers, as of one another, ſo of all good men in the whole Chriſtian Church. To this end:

" 1. Watch over one another in love.

" 2. Be willing to hear of your faults, and of the fears and ſuſpicions of theſe your friends concerning you.

" 3. Be watchful againſt any diſguſt to one another; and if any ariſes in you, without delay tell the party, and if that avail not tell the director.

" 4. Deſire the prayers one of another, and pray for one another.

" 5. Be ſure you reſt not on your being a member of this

this Society,—ſeek continually to caſt off all ſelf-dependence.

" 6. Watch the leaſt decay of love to CHRIST, or of zeal for his honour and the good of ſouls.

" 7. Confirm continually upon your heart the obligations you lie under as a member of a religious Society.

" III. The third deſign of this Society is to render us more uſeful among our neighbours.—Hereby we are more obſervable.—People will not be ſo eaſily quiet in their ſins.—Good examples carry a brighter and more convincing light, confounding the works of darkneſs. To this end,

" 1. Be careful to ſet a chriſtian example before the world.

" 2. Think not to gain any by making compliances.

" 3. Diſcountenance all ſuch things as you ſee prejudicial to others, ſuch as taverns, ale-houſes, gaming, and many ſports which are deſtructive to ſouls.

" 4. Shew all love to mens ſouls and bodies.

" 5. Avoid all diſputings, which proceed from pride, and nurſe contention and variance.

" 6. Do not be angry with thoſe who blame this Society, but meekly and ſilently bear with them.

" 7. Do not in your heart deſpiſe others, becauſe they are not members of this Society:

" 8. Nor ſhew any valuing of yourſelves becauſe you are.—Never ſpeak of yourſelf as a member, unleſs with a view of doing others good.

MOTIVES.

" 1. Real diſciples do more than nominal profeſſors.

" 2. The Spirit will ſtrengthen and comfort you.

" 3. You will have the bleſſing of a quiet conſcience.

" 4. You are engaged in the moſt honourable ſervice.

" 5. You will promote the intereſt of your Maſter.

" He

" 6. He will acknowledge your labours in the day of his appearing. *Amen.* So be it."

RULES *agreed upon for the government of the* SOCIETY.

RULE I.—" As the ſole deſign of this Society is to promote real holineſs in heart and life, every member of it is to have this continually in view, truſting in the divine power and gracious conduct of the holy Spirit, through our Lord JESUS CHRIST, to excite, advance, and perfect all good in us."

RULE II.—" That in order to the being of one heart, and one mind, and to prevent all things which gender ſtrifes, as well as to remove all occaſion of offence from being taken againſt this Society, no perſon is to be admitted a member, or allowed to continue ſuch, who is a member of any other meeting, or follows any other preaching than that of the eſtabliſhed miniſtry of the Church of *England*.—That none be members but ſuch as attend the Sacrament every month, and that no perſon be at any time introduced except by requeſt of the Director."

RULE III.—" That no perſon be admitted a member but upon the recommendation of the Director, with the conſent of the majority of members then preſent.—And that the Director be the Rev. Mr. Walker."

RULE IV.—" That the members of this Society meet together one evening in a week at a convenient place, and that they go home at nine o'clock.—And that all matters of buſineſs be done before the ſentences begin."

RULE V.—" That every member give conſtant attendance, and be preſent at the hour of meeting preciſely.—And that whoever abſents himſelf four meetings together without giving a ſatisfactory account to the

Director, which shall by him be communicated to the Society, shall be looked upon as disaffected to the Society."

RULE VI.—" That to prevent confusion, no person be removed from this Society but by the Director, who shall be present on such occasions.—That any member do beforehand apply to the Director, in case he judges such removal necessary.—That a disorderly carriage, by which is meant, not only the gross commission of scandalous sins, but also what are esteemed matters of little moment in the eyes of the world; such as a light use of the words *Lord*, *God*, *Jesus*, &c. in ordinary conversation; which we cannot but interpret as an evidence of the want of GOD's presence in the heart—The doing needless business on the Lord's day—The frequenting alehouses or taverns without necessary business, or a proud, contentious, disputing temper, (the greatest adversary to christian love and peace) be sufficient ground for such complaint and removal."

RULE VII.—" That all the members, considering the sad consequences of vanity and amusements over the nation, do in charity to the souls of others, as well as to avoid the danger of such things themselves, look upon themselves as obliged to use peculiar caution, with respect to many of the usual amusements, however innocent they may be, or be thought in themselves; such as cards, dancings, clubs for entertainment, playhouses, sports at festivals and parish-feasts, and as much as may be parish-feasts themselves.—Lest by joining herein they should be a hindrance to themselves or their neighbours."

RULE VIII.—" That with the consent of the Director, the major part of the Society have power to make a new order when need requires, but that the proposal for this purpose be made by the Director.—And that any member may

may conſult the Director hereupon before the day of meeting."

RULE IX.—"That perſons diſpoſed to become Members of this Society, muſt firſt be propoſed by the Director, in order that the Members of the Society may obſerve their conduct for the ſpace of three months before admittance."

RULE X.—"That every Member do conſider himſelf as peculiarly obliged to live in an inoffenſive and orderly manner, to the glory of GOD and the edifying his neighbours.—That he ſtudy to advance in himſelf and others, humility, faith in our Lord JESUS CHRIST, love to GOD, Goſpel repentance, and new obedience; wherein Chriſtian edification conſiſts.—And that in all his converſation hereupon, he ſticks cloſe to the plain and obvious ſenſe of the holy Scriptures, carefully avoiding all niceties and refinements upon them."

RULE XI.—"That theſe Orders ſhall be read over at leaſt four times in the year by the Director; and that with ſuch deliberation, that each Member may have time to examine himſelf by them."

RULE XII.—"That the Members of this Society do meekly and humbly join together in the following Offices of Devotion."

The OFFICE *of* DEVOTION *uſed weekly at the Meeting of the* SOCIETY.

The Director ſhall read theſe ſentences himſelf, every one ſtanding.

"GOD is very greatly to be feared in the aſſemblies of his ſaints, and to be had in reverence by all that are round about him." *Pſalm* lxxxix. 8.

"GOD is a righteous Judge, ſtrong and patient, and GOD is provoked every day." *Pſalm* vii. 12.

"GOD will bring every work into judgment, with

every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." *Eccles.* xii. 14.

" He that hideth his sins shall not prosper, but he that confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy." *Prov.* xxviii. 13.

" If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, JESUS CHRIST the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins." 1 *John* ii. 1, 2.

" O come let us worship, and fall down, and kneel before the Lord our Maker." *Psalm* xcv. 6.

Then shall be said these three Collects all kneeling.

" Prevent us, O Lord, in all our doings," *&c.*

" Blessed Lord, who hast caused all holy Scriptures," *&c.*

" O GOD, forasmuch as without thee we are not able to please thee," *&c.*

All seating themselves, a portion of Scripture shall be read. Then kneeling down they shall join in this confession of sin.

" Almighty God, Father of our Lord JESUS CHRIST, Maker of all things, Judge of all men," *&c.*

" Our Father, which art in heaven," *&c.*

After which the Director alone shall say:

" Almighty and everlasting GOD, who hatest nothing that thou hast made," *&c.*

" O most holy and blessed GOD, the Creator, Governor and Judge of all! who hatest falshood and hypocrisy, and wilt not accept the prayer of feigned lips; but hast promised to shew mercy to such as turn unto thee by true faith and repentance; vouchsafe, we pray thee, to create in us clean and upright hearts, through an unfeigned faith in thy Son our Saviour. To us indeed belongeth shame and confusion of face; we are not worthy to lift up our eyes or our voice towards heaven; our natures are depraved,

depraved, and our ways have been perverſe before thee. O let not thy wrath riſe againſt us, leſt we be conſumed in a moment; but let thy merciful bowels yearn over us, and vouchſafe to purify and pardon us through thine all-ſufficient grace and mercy in our Lord JESUS CHRIST: ſince it hath pleaſed thee to offer him up as a ſacrifice for ſinners, vouchſafe, we beſeech thee, to cleanſe us from all iniquity through his blood. We believe that he is able to ſave to the uttermoſt thoſe that come unto thee by him, and we do earneſtly deſire to embrace him as our Prince and Saviour; O give us repentance and remiſſion of ſins through his name. All we like ſheep have gone aſtray, every one in his own way; good Lord, reduce us into thy fold through this great Shepherd of ſouls, and be pleaſed to lay on him the iniquity of us all. And as we have much to be forgiven, be pleaſed to incline our hearts to love thee much, who forgiveſt iniquity, tranſgreſſion, and ſin. Give us that faith which worketh by love, and ſuch love as will conſtrain us to have regard to all thy Commandments. And make us to look carefully to all our ways, that we may never again do any thing, whereby thy holy name may be blaſphemed, or thine authority deſpiſed.

" Give us the deepeſt humility, without which we can never be accepted of thee, our infinitely condeſcending GOD: make us continually to tread in the ſteps of our bleſſed Lord and Saviour JESUS CHRIST; being of a meek and quiet ſpirit, always influenced by the higheſt love of thee our GOD, and by the moſt charitable diſpoſition towards all men.

" Vouchſafe to endue us with the ſaving knowledge of ſpiritual things, that we may receive all thy truths in the love of them, in all patience, purity, juſtice, temperance, godlineſs, and brotherly kindneſs; that we may adorn our

holy profeſſion, and reſemble the divine goodneſs of thee our heavenly Father.—And ſince we are not only weak and frail, but corrupt and ſinful, vouchſafe, O Lord, to keep us by the power of thy holy Spirit, that we fall not from our avowed ſtedfaſtneſs in all Chriſtian duty. Preſerve us from all the ſin and vanity to which our age, condition, and nature are prone, and to which the devil and this world may at any time tempt us.

" Glorify, good GOD, thy ſtrength in our weakneſs, thy grace in our pollution, and thy mercy in our ſalvation. May our holy Religion be grounded and ſettled in our hearts, that out of the good treaſure of a gracious heart, our ſpeech may be ſavoury and our converſation exemplary; that we may be fruitful in all good works, even to our old age, and to our laſt day.

" Fit us, we pray thee, for every ſtate of life into which thy Providence ſhall caſt us; proſper our lawful undertakings; preſerve us night and day, and prepare us for an hopeful death and a bleſſed eternity.

" Be pleaſed, we beſeech thee, to bleſs all thoſe Societies, who in truth apply their hearts to thy ſervice and glory; we pray thee, be pleaſed to ſtrengthen, eſtabliſh, and ſettle both them and us in thy holy faith, fear, and love. Let nothing in this world diſcourage us from the purſuit of thoſe holy purpoſes, which thy Spirit hath at any time put into our hearts and minds. But make us all faithful to thee our avowed GOD and deſired portion, even unto death; that we may at laſt (with thy whole Church) be partakers of that eternal life and perfect bliſs which thou haſt promiſed through JESUS CHRIST, thy only begotten Son, our Mediator and Redeemer. *Amen.*

" Almighty and everliving GOD, who by thy holy Apoſtle haſt taught us to make prayers and ſupplications," *&c.*

Then

Then all ſtanding up, a Pſalm ſhall be ſung and a Sermon read, or a Charge given by the Director. After which ſome ſuitable Prayer ſhall be uſed as he ſhall judge fit.

Then all ſtanding up, this Exhortation to Humility ſhall be read.

" My Brethren, ſince the great GOD has often aſſured us in his holy word, that *he will reſiſt the proud, and give grace unto the humble*, James iv. 6. 1 Pet. v. 5. Let us conſider that all our undertakings, though never ſo good, will fail and come to nought, unleſs we be truly and deeply humble, *Luke* xiv. 11. Indeed it cannot be otherwiſe; becauſe the proud perſon quits his reliance on GOD to reſt in himſelf; which is to exchange a rock for a reed.

" Alas! what are we poor empty things! *Gen.* xxxii. 10. Yea, what is worſe, we are condemned periſhing ſinners; we have perhaps underſtanding now, but GOD can ſoon turn it into madneſs, *Dan.* iv. 42. We may have ſome attainments in grace, but ſpiritual pride will wither all, and ſoon reduce us to a very profligate and wretched eſtate, *Iſa.* lxvi. 2. ſuch as we have ſeen others fall into, who have begun in the Spirit, and ended in the fleſh. *What have we, that we have not received*, 1 Cor. iv. 7. And even that he who gave it may as ſoon take away.

" Ye that are young in years, and younger in grace, 1 *Tim.* iii. 6. are in danger of ſelf-conceit, and of being puffed up; which is a quickſand in which thouſands have been ſwallowed up and periſhed. It is not in vain that the Apoſtle requires, that young men be exhorted to be ſober-minded, *Tit.* ii. 6. *Prov.* xvi. 18. which he elſewhere explains when he ſays, *Let no man think of himſelf more highly than he ought to think, but to think ſoberly*, *Rom.* xii. 3. *Iſa.* xiv. 12, 13.

" By pride the angels fell from heaven, 1 *Tim.* iii. 6. and if ever we climb up to thoſe bleſſed ſeats from which

they are fallen, it muſt be by the gracious ſteps of humility and lowlineſs of mind, *Luke* xviii. 14. *Wherefore let him that thinketh he ſtandeth take heed leſt he fall*, 1 Cor. x. 12. *Let us walk humbly with our God*, and ever have lowly thoughts of our vile ſelves, *Rom.* xi. 20. and of our poor attainments, and of our defective performances; and with St. *Paul* (who was nothing behind the very chiefeſt Apoſtles) let us always ſay, *I am nothing*, 2 Cor. xii. 11.

"Let us therefore now ſing to the praiſe and glory of GOD, to whom alone praiſe is due."

A Pſalm being ſung the Director ſhall ſay,

"It is very meet and right," *&c.*

All ſhall join,

"Therefore with angels and archangels," *&c.*

The Director alone,

"The grace of our Lord JESUS CHRIST," *&c. Amen.*

THE Members of this Society, beſides convening together, in the manner related above, for the purpoſes of prayer and reading, aſſemble themſelves once a week in ſmaller numbers to ſpeak to each other concerning their peculiar trials, and to receive the benefit of mutual advice in a free converſation. The time for this meeting is not limited to any particular day or hour, but appointed at ſuch ſeaſons as are moſt convenient to the parties concerned. By this means it is ſo contrived as never to interfere with their worldly buſineſs, and therefore ſometimes they aſſociate early in the morning before ſervice on the *Sunday*, ſometimes in the intervals between ſervice, and at other times in the evenings of a week-day, after their work is over. On theſe occaſions not leſs than five, or more than eight, are preſent, who at all other times are inſpectors over one another's conduct. Their ſeveral diſtributions

tributions are allotted ſuitably to their age, condition, and circumſtances, that ſo, their trials being nearly the ſame, they might be better able to ſtrengthen and exhort each other. The married men meet together by themſelves, the unmarried by themſelves, and ſo the women in like manner. In order to avoid confuſion, and to put them into a proper method of carrying on ſuch a deſign with due order and regularity, Mr. Walker drew up a ſmall treatiſe, which he ſtiled, *Regulations and Helps for promoting religious Converſation among Chriſtians.*

In this tract it is propoſed that a ſelect number of Chriſtian friends do meet together weekly for improving each other in Chriſtian knowledge and practice by the grace of GOD. The following Regulations are ſubmitted to conſideration as proper to preſerve order, and to promote the ends deſigned by ſuch a meeting.

REGULATION I.

"That every perſon come to the meeting now propoſed with a prepared heart, expecting, through divine grace, to receive improvement in ſaving knowledge, ſelf-conviction, and edification.

"II. That the converſation be introduced and ended with prayer.

"III. That they ſpeak freely and lay open their hearts, as far as their own caſe, or that of others, may require.

"IV. That they beware of conceit in delivering their ſentiments, and of diffidence in being afraid to ſpeak them.

"V. That in the ſpirit of meekneſs and humility, counting others better than themſelves, they do warn each other of their faults, freely and affectionately, examining every thing thoroughly.

"VI. That the converſation be confined to the ſtate of one another, and that all prying curioſity be excluded.

" VII. That each perſon be allowed to ſpeak in turn, and that as briefly as poſſible.—That none be interrupted while ſpeaking; and when all have delivered their ſentiments, that the enquirer may then apply what has been ſaid to his own caſe, and nothing farther be ſaid on that ſubject, unleſs the enquirer ſhould deſire any perſon more fully to explain himſelf.

" VIII. That each perſon do carefully examine and watch over his heart, that no diſguſt be taken againſt any who have ſpoken freely to his caſe, or may ſeem to have more knowledge or experience than himſelf.

" IX. That they often aſk their own hearts, whether they have a deſire to come to ſuch converſation? and if not; why?

" X. That afterwards each perſon carefully recollect and endeavour to improve the converſation.

" XI. That what paſſes in ſuch converſation be not divulged elſewhere."

To theſe Regulations are annexed proper inquiries concerning growth in humility, faith in JESUS CHRIST, the love of GOD and of our neighbour, and divers other intereſting points, by way of help for matter of converſation. At ſome times they proceed in their conferences upon queſtions taken out of this treatiſe, at others they ſpeak indiſcriminately whatever lies neareſt upon their hearts. One conſtant queſtion is, If either of them have obſerved any thing unbecoming or ſuſpicious in the conduct of the reſt; and each, in their turn, is very free in mentioning ſuch ſuſpicions (if he has any) while the perſon ſpoken to is as ready to anſwer, whether to explain the reaſons of ſuch conduct, or to take ſhame for it, if wrong.

The mutual inquiries into the ſtate of each others ſouls being finiſhed, the Inquirer for the day (for each ſucceeds to this office by rotation) concludes with prayer, and if time permits, they ſing a hymn, and then part.

The

The other *Society* was compoſed of the neighbouring Clergy, and proper regulations for the conducting ſuch a meeting were aſſented to by the ſeveral Members of the Club. The end and deſign of this intercourſe among the Clergy is exhibited in the following extract from a letter written by one who was himſelf engaged in it.

" Mr. Walker was the perſon who firſt propoſed a friendly meeting of neighbouring Clergymen, with a view to improve one another in Chriſtian knowledge, for the better edification of the people committed to their care, and to encourage each other if, as it was likely, any difficulty or oppoſition ſhould ariſe to either of them in the more vigorous diſcharge of the miniſterial duty. An outcry was ſoon made againſt this meeting both by Clergy and Laity, as if the whole Society was methodiſtically inclined; though nothing is more certain, than that all the Members of it were zealouſly attached to the *Church* of *England*, or preſent eccleſiaſtical eſtabliſhment, both in its doctrine and diſcipline. Their number originally conſiſted of ſeven, to whom were afterwards added four others: of whom, before Mr. Walker's death, four had died, two had left the meeting through fear of the world, and two had been removed to a ſituation too diſtant to give attendance. It was propoſed to meet ſeven months in the year, on the firſt *Tueſday* after every full moon, at their ſeveral houſes by turns; to meet at ten; to dine at two; to have two plain diſhes of meat and no more; not to ſtay later than ſix o'clock; and that the perſon, at whoſe houſe the meeting was, ſhould take care, that one only ſpeak at a time, and that no new matter be brought on the carpet, till the matter in queſtion (whatever it were) ſhould be ſatisfactorily adjuſted.

" Whatever ſubject the converſation turned upon, every Member of the Club was deſired to draw up his ſentiments

in writing against next Club-day, either in the form of a Sermon, or what other form each person saw fit, for the better assurance that the subject was well digested.

" Before the Club proceeded to business, they always offered up their joint prayers to GOD for his blessing, in a form collected by Mr. Walker, from the *Liturgy*, *The Whole Duty of Man*, and Mr. Jenks's *Devotions*.

" The following Queries were thought proper for every Member to put to himself often.

" *Query* 1. What is it that I have in view, or what is my mind chiefly engaged upon? Is it the setting forth of GOD's glory? or, is there some worldly meaner matter, which has as much room in my thoughts as that?

" 2. When I sit down to make a Sermon, or when I go into the pulpit to preach it, is my mind running on the performing of a task, or on gaining esteem by performing it well? or, am I chiefly concerned to do something for GOD?

" 3. Would I rather that the interest of CHRIST, whose Minister I am, be advanced in the world, though I should thereby forfeit ease and other conveniences, than favour these, to the neglecting of his interest?

" 4. What is my view as a Member of this Society? How may I know, whether I am employing myself here to the best purposes, agreeably to the design of the meeting?

" 5. Do I continually look up for divine Grace to accompany and prosper my ministrations? And, in this strength, am I often enquiring after the success of my ministry with anxiety? And, relying on Gospel-promises for this strength, am I continually seeking it in prayer public and private?

" 6. Am I satisfied with the answer, that my conscience makes to these questions, as I could wish to be when I shall be lying on my death-bed, when every thought will

sink

ſink to the bottom of my ſoul, and when I am juſt to be called upon to render up my account of this important charge and miniſtry?"

We paſs on now to give ſome farther account of Mr. Walker and his public labours. Though he had formed to himſelf a plan of happineſs in the enjoyment of his eaſe, in the company of his friends, and in partaking of pleaſurable amuſements; it pleaſed the GOD of all Grace to convince him of the error of his way, and to cut out a work of a far different nature for the employment of his thoughts and time, by making uſe of him as an inſtrument in his hands to *turn many from darkneſs to light, and from the power of Satan unto God.* The work of Grace went on gradually in his own ſoul. Nor was it without much ſelf-denial and oppoſition to his fears and his connections in life, that he began to declare to others the convictions which had newly impreſſed his heart. Being careſſed by all companies, wherever he went, as a man of good underſtanding and good manners, he was called upon to give up many of the choiceſt comforts of this life for the ſake of the GOSPEL; becauſe he evidently foreſaw that, unleſs his former companions ſhould be brought to experience the ſame change which he had entered upon, they would at leaſt look cool upon him, if not ſeparate him from their company, or perhaps caſt a ſlur upon his reputation. How great a trial this is to a man who is naturally fond of eſteem, thoſe only can be proper judges, who have themſelves been under the ſame difficult circumſtances. Yet in deſpite of every carnal and ſelfiſh motive, which the love of eaſe, the apprehenſions of ſhame, or the fear of men's faces might ſuggeſt to the contrary, the Lord preſerved him faithful to the light he had received, and emboldened him to make

make an open and unreſerved profeſſion of the truth, in proportion as he himſelf became acquainted with it.

The ſame zeal that influenced his private conduct appeared alſo in his diſcharge of the duties of the miniſtry. In his public addreſſes from the pulpit, of which he ſeldom omitted to prepare a new one for every *Sunday*, he endeavoured rightly to divide the word of Truth, by diſtributing to each of his audience a portion ſuitable to their ſeveral ſtates. Having in view the glory of GOD and the ſalvation of the ſouls committed to his charge, as the great end of his preaching, he ſtudied not ſo much to pleaſe the ear, as to inform the mind and amend the heart. To this end he applied with cloſeneſs and energy the ſpirituality of GOD's law, together with the curſes denounced againſt the tranſgreſſor, to the careleſs ſinner, in order to beget in him a conviction of his loſt eſtate, and to awaken him to a ſenſe of his danger. The more decent Formaliſt, (who differs from the former in reſtraining himſelf from acts of groſſer ſin and in obſerving the externals of religion, while his heart continues unhumbled and unconverted) he flattered not on account of his fair outſide, but faithfully repreſented to him the folly and abſurdity of reſting in *a form of Godlineſs void of the power thereof.*

To the ſerious Chriſtian, who was already made ſenſible of the corruption of his nature, and deſired to ſerve GOD in ſpirit and in truth in the way of his appointed ordinances, he laid open the plan of the Goſpel in its various parts, as a ſcheme deviſed by infinite wiſdom for the recovery of ſinful fallen creatures: to ſuch as, by the renunciation of their own wiſdom, righteouſneſs and ſtrength, were prepared to receive a proffered ſalvation, he preached CHRIST JESUS, a Prophet both willing and able to teach them by the co-operation of his Word and Spirit;

Spirit; a Prieſt to intercede for them by the meritorious ſacrifice of his death; and a King to protect and govern them by ſending the ſacred influence of his Spirit into their hearts. Thus he taught the true believer to behold his ſins expiated in *the blood of the Lamb of God, which taketh away the ſin of the world*; to ſee his perſon accepted in the righteouſneſs of his Redeemer, and to reſt in nothing ſhort of a real and univerſal change in heart and life, that he might become *a new creature, created in Chriſt Jeſus unto good works.* Nor is it to be forgotten, that, while he endeavoured both to beget and to improve the divine life in the hearts of his audience, he ſtrenuouſly enforced, as an eminent part of it, the neceſſity of obſerving the relative and ſocial duties in civil life. Beſides this general tendency of his ſermons, he occaſionally enlarged upon ſuch ſubjects as by his continual intercourſe with his people he perceived it expedient for him to ſpeak upon. His diſcourſes, after he had preached them, were read on the *Sunday* evening in the Society, and afterwards handed from one to another, by which means the matter of them was more deeply imprinted on the minds of the hearers, and the knowledge of religion more generally diſperſed. Beſides his ſtated ſermons on *Sunday* mornings, there were other occaſional ſermons called *Gift Sermons*, eſtabliſhed by former benefactions, on ſome week days. And on all the *Chriſtmas* holidays, on the *Eaſter* and *Whitſun* holidays he had always Lectures in the afternoons on ſome portion of Scripture, either relating to the ſeaſon, or elſe ſuch as were ſuitable to the ſtate of the more ſerious part of the congregation which attended him. This ſtruck an awe into the place, and prevented manifold abuſes, ſuch as players and cock-fightings, *&c.* againſt which he openly bore his teſtimony. But his heart was moſt ſet upon the much neglected

glected duty of *catechising*, in which he spent every *Sunday* evening, from six to eight, from the beginning of *February* to the end of *April*, and again from the beginning of *August* to the end of *October*. This he did to a very numerous congregation. In the Summer he had a Lecture every *Thursday* evening. And in the Winter quarter he lectured on CHRIST's Sermon on the Mount every *Sunday* evening. All this he did in public, besides his Lectures every *Tuesday* in the Society room, which he was at last prevailed with, on account of his health, to give up. It pleased GOD that in the last two years of his ministry, a considerable number of young people were awakened; on which occasion, he set up a private Lecture to them in his own room twice in the week in the evening. This meeting was so crouded and so hot that his friends evidently saw that his strength was much impaired, and that his life would be shortened by it; yet the undertaking seemed to be so charitable a design for the good of young souls, and he was so intent upon it, that they did not care to press him to desist from it. Indeed his compassion to the souls of perishing sinners appeared to be his shining grace; insomuch, that when in conversation any hardened and impenitent sinner was mentioned, he seemed to express an inward pungent distress of soul. His labours hitherto mentioned, were publicly known. But his room for private advice was daily frequented, except on *Saturdays*; which day he always reserved to himself to prepare his discourse for the *Sunday*; so that from first to last he thought that about a thousand of the inhabitants of the town, besides strangers from the adjacent parts, had been with him for private advice regarding the state of their souls. After he became so much engaged, he had little leisure for studying the works of others; the Bible was then almost the only

book

book he applied himſelf to; from this ſacred fountain he drew that deep and practical knowledge, which his charitable heart was always ready to communicate to others.

After it had pleaſed GOD to bleſs his miniſtrations at *Truro* in ſo remarkable a manner, that the number of people, in whom an appearance of a real change of heart and life was viſible, became conſiderable, he thought that a new and ſpiritual relation commenced between him and his flock; and accordingly it became his ſettled judgment that he ought not, on any worldly conſideration, to leave them, unleſs Providence ſhould open to him a more extenſive field of uſefulneſs to the Church of Chriſt, or he ſhould be removed by ſuperior authority. This may account for his giving up the Vicarage of *Talland*, to which he was preſented in the year 1747 by the Truſtees of the will of his late Patron Walter Kendall, Eſquire. Having the Biſhop's leave for abſence he held this Vicarage for a time, till growing diſſatisfied in his conſcience concerning the juſtifiableneſs of non-reſidence, he reſigned it, and could never afterwards be induced to accept of another living, though he had the offer of four. Yet he went not about this affair with a precipitant zeal, but with his uſual calmneſs of judgment and deliberation, and after conſulting ſome able Divines on the ſubject of *Pluralities* and *Non-reſidence*, and among the reſt the well-known Treatiſe of the late Dr. *Newton*. This circumſtance, though often talked of between him and his friends, was never mentioned without his expreſſing at the ſame time how great a burden he found himſelf delivered from, when he gave up a charge of ſouls, whom he had it not in his power to inſpect. After this he was not only content but even ſatisfied in his low circumſtances, though they became reduced beyond what might have been reaſonably expected: and when he was no longer

able

able to support the expence of housekeeping, he went into poor lodgings; where, though his board and habitation were of the most ordinary kind, yet, as his mind was wholly intent upon spreading the saving knowledge of the Gospel, he lived in peace and calmness.

There yet remains another instance of his love to souls to be taken notice of, which I am unwilling to omit not only out of respect to his memory, as it shews his unwearied assiduity in promoting the interests of his Master's kingdom, but likewise with a view, that others who have a like opportunity afforded to them, may herein follow his example.

In the beginning of *November*, in the year 1756, three companies of General *Anstruther*'s regiment of soldiers were sent into Winter-quarters at *Truro*. The zeal of our pious Minister engaged him to set to work to promote the knowledge and practice of religion among them, and it pleased GOD to give a peculiar blessing to his labours exerted on this occasion. Of this matter I am able to give a more satisfactory account, having by me a letter of Mr. Walker's wherein he gives a detail of it to his Friend, out of which I present the reader with the following extract.

"It is my way in writing to my friends to speak what is most nearly on my heart, and especially if it be any thing which I may hope will excite their praises, and engage their intercessions in my behalf. Such is the circumstance I have now to communicate respecting the success of the Gospel among the Soldiers quartered in this town. I endeavoured to lose no time with them from their first arrival, but without delay preached a sermon extraordinary on their account on *Sunday* afternoon, called by the people here the *Soldiers Sermon*. There was at first great difficulty to get their attendance to hear it; for though they

they were ordered to be at church in the morning, and brought thither by their officers, yet they uſed to turn off at the door. In this point I was helped by the zeal of my dear People of the Society, who made it their buſineſs to ſpeak to theſe poor creatures, giving them proper advice, and prevailing on a few of them to be at church, as was wiſhed. They ſoon became a larger number. And our labours were ſo bleſſed to them and us, that in leſs than three weeks a full hundred of them came to my houſe aſking *what they muſt do?* This was what I aimed at, an opportunity of perſonal and free converſation. The effects have been very ſtriking. One or two of the whole only excepted, you would have ſeen their countenances changing, tears often burſting from their eyes, and confeſſions of their exceeding ſinfulneſs and danger breaking from their mouths. I have ſcarcely heard ſuch a thing as ſelf-excuſing from one of them; while their deſire to be inſtructed, and uncommon thankfulneſs for the leaſt pains uſed upon them by any of us, have been very remarkable. Such promiſing ſymptoms gave me great confidence it would come to ſomething, and more ſo when I found that many of them were greatly ſtirred up to pray. Many of them, as was to be expected, ſoon went back. Nevertheleſs thus far, both they and the others who never came near me in private, are plainly influenced, that a certain fear has reſtrained them from ſwearing and curſing, which, when they came hither, was univerſally their practice; has engaged them to attend public worſhip, and at leaſt ſo far biaſed their conduct that military puniſhments are grown much leſs frequent among them. There are about twenty who have kept cloſe to the means of Grace, and concerning whom I have encouraging hope that a *good work* is *begun* in them. Indeed conviction of ſin appears to have gone deep

deep with them, and they are crying after CHRIST with such marks of *godly sorrow* as make me hope it is indeed *a sorrow which worketh repentance unto salvation.*

" These I intend shall be united together, when they leave us, under the name of the *Soldiers Society*, having already drawn up regulations for the purpose. And while they are here, they make a part of our Society, by the exercises of which, as well as by meetings I particularly appoint for their use, they seem to be much established. What such a Society of Soldiers may produce amongst that body of men GOD only knows; yet I would comfort myself with the hope it may please the Lord it shall go farther. It may be observed that seven of these, namely, six *Scotchmen* and one *English* Dissenter, have enjoyed the benefit of religious knowledge in their youth; the rest, excepting two, I find totally ignorant of every thing relating to CHRIST. And this, their total ignorance, has made me lament the superficial use or entire neglect of *Catechising* amongst the *English* Clergy, by which, more than by any other thing, I am persuaded the kingdom of darkness and sin is established in *England.*"

At the conclusion of the extract from the above letter it may not be improper to add, that the officers who commanded these companies waited on Mr. Walker purposely to return him their thanks, and to acknowledge their obligations to him for the pains he had taken with their men, and for the reformation begun among them.

Thus were the labours of this faithful Minister of CHRIST employed in superintending the flock more immediately committed to his care, in giving his advice to those who came to consult him from neighbouring places, and in cultivating a spirit of religion among those who seemed to be more accidentally thrown in his way. To

obviate

obviate one groundleſs calumny with which the careleſs and lukewarm have often been apt to charge a life of ſerious godlineſs, as if it gave encouragement to the neglect of ſecular buſineſs, it may not be improper to remark, that at the ſame time that he was earneſt in preſſing it upon all that came to him for advice, to ſeek the kingdom of GOD and his righteouſneſs, as the one thing needful; he never forgot to exhort perſons of all conditions and occupations in life, to apply themſelves with diligence to the duties of their reſpective callings: telling them as the ſtrongeſt argument that could be urged, that the proſperity and tranquillity of their ſouls would be more effectually promoted by a careful and induſtrious attention to the buſineſs of their ſtation, than by devoting themſelves wholly to the ſtudy of religion, to the neglect of thoſe employments, which the place that GOD had aſſigned them in the world required at their hands. The truth of which obſervation I have heard confirmed by the experience of thoſe who have hearkened to his counſel in this particular.

His natural ſagacity and penetration, improved by a continued attention to the motions of his own heart, in a courſe of daily circumſpection and watchfulneſs (of which we ſhall have occaſion to ſpeak hereafter) gave him ſuch an inſight into the deceitful workings of the human breaſt, and the nature of the trials wherewith our ſpiritual adverſaries ſtrive to obſtruct the operations of divine Grace, that it was uſual with him, when any came to open their hearts to him, though they were ſtrangers, by aſking a few queſtions relating to the experience of their minds, to tell them what had paſſed within their breaſts, even before they acknowledged it with their own lips. As a ſkilful phyſician, when he is made acquainted with the principal and ruling ſymptoms of a patient's diſorder,

knows how the whole syſtem of the bodily machine is affected throughout; ſo this phyſician of ſouls being informed of a prevailing corruption or temptation, could with eaſe diſcern what effect it would have upon the whole ſtate of the heart.

We have ſeen after what manner Mr. Walker addreſſed himſelf to thoſe who opened their minds to him in a perſonal conference. His practice was to examine the diſpoſition of their hearts to the bottom, that he might be the better enabled to adviſe them how to counteract the growing malady of their diſorders, and to direct them to the proper means of recovery. The like vein of heart-ſearching doctrine is to be obſerved throughout his writings. The Reader will not find in them a bare ſyſtem of morality, calculated only to refine and poliſh the outward manners; our Author laid the foundation of Religion deep in a growing diſcovery and humbling ſenſe of the ſinfulneſs, guilt and impotence of *our fallen nature*, that he might the more clearly evince the neceſſity of our cordially receiving CHRIST JESUS in his mediatorial offices, as *of God made unto us wiſdom, righteouſneſs, ſanctification and redemption*. Let not human pride then take offence at ſeeing its corruptions expoſed to view; rather let it bow its head to the duſt, cover itſelf with ſhame and abaſement, conſcious of its unworthineſs; and acknowledge with a becoming thankfulneſs the gracious interpoſition of a Redeemer to recover us from our loſt eſtate. But this thankful acceptance of relief through CHRIST cannot ariſe but out of a due conviction of our want thereof. Upon this perſuaſion Mr. Walker in his diſcourſes delivered from the pulpit, in his converſations, and in his writings from the preſs, laboured this point, namely, to eſtabliſh the neceſſity of becoming *acquainted with our fallen ſtate*, becauſe thereon depends the right

manner of our ſeeking pardon and acceptance with GOD, through the atoning blood and all-ſufficient righteouſneſs of CHRIST, and of our attaining unto holineſs of heart and life by the ſanctifying operations of the Holy Spirit in conſequence of our being vitally united to him by faith. The following table exhibits a view of his works made public.

1. A Sermon on 1 *Samuel* xx. 3. at the funeral of a young man that was drowned as he was bathing, on *Sunday June* 3, 1753.
2. The Chriſtian, a ſet of practical Sermons, 1755.
3. A Sermon on *Amos* iv. 12. preached at *Truro*, 1756.
4. A Letter from a Clergyman concerning the firſt queſtion in the office for the ordaining of Deacons, 1758.
5. Regulations and Helps propoſed for promoting Religious Converſation among Chriſtians.
6. A Diſcourſe on the Neceſſity of being acquainted with our fallen ſtate.
7. A Familiar Catechiſm, 1759.
8. A Short Inſtruction and Examination for the Lord's Supper.
9. A Treatiſe on Conviction of Sin.
10. A Familiar Introduction to the knowledge of ourſelves, 1761.

Several other ſmall Tracts were publiſhed monthly by himſelf and other miniſters.

Of the above-mentioned writings, the Chriſtian, a ſmall volume, conſiſting of eleven Sermons, paſſed through a ſecond and third edition in the years 1756 and 1759, with a recommendatory Preface, written by the Rev. Mr. Thomas Adam, Rector of *Wintringham*, in *Lincolnſhire*.

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The two last Treatises, namely, Conviction of Sin, and Familiar Introduction to the knowledge of ourselves, were chiefly composed, and the Instruction and Examination for the Lord's Supper, was revised and enlarged by our Author in his last illness; at which time, though his bodily strength was almost worn down, and his spirits near exhausted with a lingering fever and atrophy; yet such was the vigour of his intellectual powers, that without requiring time to arrange his thoughts, and without hesitating for expression, he dictated to his amanuensis the contents of each of these Tracts, as fast as he could commit them to paper, in all the clearness of argument and propriety of diction in which they now appear.

With regard to the *Discourses*, to which this account of the Author's Life is prefixed, it will be requisite to advertise the Reader, that it was his design, if it had pleased GOD to have granted to him the continuance of life and health, to have gone through the whole of the Church Catechism in a set of practical and expository Lectures, and afterwards to have sent them abroad into the world. Which design had Mr. Walker lived to have accomplished, the Sermons upon *the Moral Law, or Ten Commandments*, which as they now appear, are more particularly calculated to serve the purpose of conviction of sin in order to enforce the necessity of taking refuge in CHRIST for justification, would then have been revised and made public under a different form, as holding forth likewise a rule of life to the believing professor.

The twenty-fifth Sermon upon the Catechism, which was preached at *Truro* on the 27th of *April*, in the year 1760, and was the last Discourse delivered by our Author in public, deserves our particular notice. The subject is most awful and interesting; and the manner of treating it awakening and affecting. Having in some of the preceding

ceding Lectures conſidered in a practical view the reſurrection of CHRIST as head of his body the Church, his aſcenſion into the higheſt heavens to prepare a place for his people, and his ſeſſion at the right hand of GOD as the great Advocate and Interceſſor, pleading continually before the Father the propitiatory ſacrifice of his obedience unto death; in this he repreſents him at his ſecond coming as univerſal Judge, ſummoning all mankind before his righteous Tribunal. The ſolemn tranſactions of the Day of Judgment being, as ſhould ſeem to us accidentally, the ſubject of Mr. Walker's laſt addreſs to his Pariſhioners, it gave him an opportunity of ſpeaking to them in ſuch a manner, that if he had been actually apprized that it ſhould be his laſt Sermon, he could not have taken his leave of them more properly. After a very ſerious and earneſt expoſtulation with the careleſs, idle, pleaſure-loving ſinner, he concludes with delivering, as it were, his dying words to a congregation, among whom he had miniſtered ſo long a time with ſo much zeal and aſſiduity, in this remarkable paſſage;

" Well; we ſhall appear before the judgment-ſeat of CHRIST together. There the controverſy between me, calling upon you by the terrors of the Lord, and you, determined to abide in your ſins, will be decided. There it will appear whether your blood will be upon your own heads for your obſtinate impenitency, or upon mine for not giving you warning. CHRIST will certainly either acquit or condemn me on this behalf; and if I ſhould be acquitted herein, what will become of you? I tremble to think how ſo many words of mine will be brought up againſt you on that day. What will you ſay, what will you anſwer, how will you excuſe yourſelves? O Sirs, if you will not be prevailed upon, you will eternally curſe the day that you knew me, or heard one word from my

mouth. Why, why, why will you die with ſo aggravated a deſtruction? O think of the judgment, think of it, and you will not be able to hold it out againſt your own ſouls. May the Lord incline you to do ſo; may he cauſe this word to ſink deep into your hearts; may he ſhew you all your danger; and with an outſtretched arm bring you out of the hands of the devil, and tranſlate you into the glorious kingdom of his dear Son, to his own glory and your unſpeakable happineſs in the day of the appearance of our Lord and Saviour JESUS CHRIST. Even ſo, moſt mighty GOD and moſt merciful Father, for the ſame JESUS CHRIST's ſake."

With theſe ſtriking words did this faithful ſervant of CHRIST finiſh his public Miniſtry.

It has been made evident from the account of his conſtant attention to the duties of the ſacred office, that he ſpared no pains in uſing his moſt diligent endeavours for the promoting of GOD's glory and the edifying the people committed to his charge: it will now appear from a few ſelected extracts, taken from his own papers, that he dictated no rule to others which he did not conform to himſelf; but that an intimate knowledge of his own heart, and a deep experience of an inward work of divine grace, enabled him to direct others with ſuch peculiar ſkill under their ſeveral trials in the way of ſalvation. Being himſelf converted, not to a notional aſſent remaining in the head, but to a lively operative faith working by love in the deep ground of the heart, he knew after what manner to ſtrengthen his Brethren.

A SPECIMEN *of Mr.* WALKER'S EXPERIENCES, *and of his Watchfulneſs over his own Heart.*

Sunday, September 17, 1752.—"*Thurſday* night laſt I was viſited with a ſudden and violent diſorder, which in a few

a few minutes brought my life into danger. Such was GOD's good pleaſure. It was his fatherly goodneſs hereby to give me a more practical and intereſting ſenſe of death and eternity. Hereby he hath taught me the great importance of every hour I live; I can ſay now I feel it with a more active impreſſion. May I number my reſtored days wiſely! nor may the things of this life ever more ſeparate eternal things from before my eyes! may I live to his glory, who hath thus lengthened my days! Remember, my ſoul, in the confuſion of the haſty hour, how little thou couldſt do; juſt no more than preſent a broken reſignation of thyſelf into the hands of thy heavenly Father. Remember how thou waſt oppreſſed with a ſpiritual inſenſibility; all the objects of faith how dead and flat; how without either fear, or hope, or truſt in any degree of lively exerciſe! Ah, my ſoul, the dying hour is not for the work of Religion, for gaining an intereſt in CHRIST. This muſt be the buſineſs of my healthy days. In theſe I muſt ſeek to humble my ſoul, renounce myſelf, caſt off all dependence on myſelf, and on every thing, which by the grace of GOD is wrought in me, and to work out my ſalvation, drawn by the love of Jeſus to yield myſelf to him, the purchaſe of his blood. Now I muſt ſeek peace in believing on the Son of GOD, and prove that I have a title to juſtification through him, by all the evidences of his Spirit working in me. Keep me in this faith, thou Mediator, with whom I do heartily truſt my ſoul. Yea, increaſe this faith in me. And let me know that I belong to thee by the ſanctification of my corrupt nature more and more. Sunk as I am into the grave and death of ſin, let me hear the powerful voice of thy word, and feel thy quickning influences upon my heart, and come forth, and live in holy obedience to thy call. Yea, let me live no more to myſelf. Thou haſt given me warning, a ſuffi-

cient ſummons to be ready, that by and by I muſt be away. Let me live to thee, that thou mayeſt acknowledge me at thy judgment."

Sunday, March 4, 1753.—" By the endurance and goodneſs of GOD I am alive this day, and have been enabled without diſturbance to renew the covenant of grace. Praiſe be to GOD, my mind was clear, my conſcience quiet, and with due deliberation, and without diſtraction I was before the Lord. I muſt bleſs him alſo that the ordinance was with comfort. Faith ſeemed in exerciſe more than uſual to ſee, receive, and in ſome meaſure to appropriate CHRIST to me in communicating. Though always I have cauſe to complain of the hardneſs of my heart, yet now I could in ſome ſort mourn and love. I found heartineſs in my purpoſes of ſerving the glory and intereſt of GOD in CHRIST, and was forward to make a full ſurrender of myſelf, depending upon divine grace. It has been a day with me ſignally marked with divine favour. Notwithſtanding the inſenſibility and unbelief of my heart, I am returned rejoicing. What now ſhall I render unto the Lord? It may be, ſome greater trial than ordinary is at hand. Let me be mindful therefore of the vows I have this day made. Thy peculiar ſuit, my ſoul, was, that pride might no longer have dominion over us; that the loſs of mens opinion and eſteem might not fright on one ſide, nor the approbation of friends puff us up on the other. We ſued alſo for a more enlarged ſpirit of love, that thoſe who ſpeak evil againſt us, or uſe us ill for the work's ſake, may be entertained with compaſſion and forgiveneſs, without reſentment or hatred. We ſued for this charitable mind and demeanor towards thoſe miſtaken perſons, who, prejudiced to their own opinions, repreſent us as not preaching the word of GOD ſoundly. Lord, it is thy pleaſure to try me with the reproaches of the

the wanton and careleſs; and with the miſapprehenſions of thoſe, who having conceived unſafe evidences of faith, blame me that I ſpeak not as they do, and ignorantly oppoſe themſelves. Lord, keep me in a charitable temper to endure with meekneſs the outrages of one, and the prejudiced miſtakings of the other of theſe, betwixt whom my lot is fallen to me! We intreated alſo thy bleſſing on our Society of Miniſters. Grant, O GOD, that it may be a bleſſed inſtrument of reviving true practical Religion. Keep us from pride, and debate, and jealouſy! Grant us to watch over one another in love! and be thou ever with us, enlarging all our hearts with zeal, conſtancy and charity, and mortifying the world and our luſts continually; that as we are ſeparated to the Miniſtry, we may mind this one thing, to feed the ſheep. And to me, O my GOD, give all needful direction, that I may ſpeak boldly and prudently among them, humbly and affectionately, without pride or reſentment. See now, my ſoul, the work before thee, but ſhrink not: remember how GOD hath viſited thee this day. Be ſtrong and of good courage, and yet be fearful leſt thou let any thing of all this ſlip. Thou great Shepherd, leave me not. *Amen.*"

Tueſday, April 27, 1756.—" I have found myſelf this day greatly exerciſed by fear of men. I would, I hope, be, and live wholly to GOD's glory, and act as his intereſts require; but I experience a lurking deſire of man's eſteem mixing with the natural timidy of my conſtitution, which makes me inwardly draw back from any approaching trial, in which I am to look in the face perſons of an angry and violent temper. It is to the free and mighty influence of the Spirit of GOD I owe it, that this fear hath not dominion, and that in deſpite of it, I am enabled to perſiſt in the ways of GOD and the diſcharge of my duty, in oppoſition to this ſecret enemy. Yet I have

reaſon to ſuſpect that though it doth not hinder me from doing, yet it cramps me in doing. I deſire to wait with patience, to be humbled, to be thankful for the meaſure of liberty beſtowed on me, and to believe always that his grace is ſufficient for me.

" How hard is it to be angry and ſin not! as much as *ſelf* mixes, it is ſinful. I think not more than twice in my life have I been angry without plainly ſeeing ſin. I ſuppoſe true Goſpel Ζηλος does not ruffle the temper, nor leave any perturbation behind it. It muſt be perfectly conſiſtent with meekneſs, and is ſinful, if not accompanied with compaſſion: *He looked about upon them with indignation, being grieved at the hardneſs of their hearts.* Surely our zeal and meekneſs bear proportion to our humility. I have moſt zeal and leaſt wild-fire when I am moſt humbled in the ſenſe of my ſins. Lord, make me humble; Lord, keep me humble.

Tueſday, June 15, 1756.—" I know not how many evil tempers I have found working this day; particularly conceit, when converſing with ——. I have been kept from trials this day; ſo can ſay nothing what degrees of prevalence I am under of fear of men. I have come very ſhort of that actual communion with GOD by meditation and ejaculation that I wiſh for."

Monday, June 28.—" Sloth and buſineſs have prevented me the days paſt from continuing my journal, but I am ſenſible of the want of it. I cannot walk cloſely with GOD without daily watchfulneſs and examination. Yeſterday's Sermon related to a ſenſe of the ſinfulneſs of ſin, as the great principle on which converſion ſtands contradiſtinguiſhed from ſervile fear. I cannot be ſo clear as I wiſh on this point.—*In private exerciſes* I find a deſire to ſerve GOD, and wiſh to ſee him glorified: but my heart I find exceedingly ſelfiſh, *in the world.*—This day

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on the road to ——— I enjoyed uſeful meditation two hours; my heart much drawn up to GOD, and approving his ſervice and preſence; but in the remainder of my journey I was confuſed, and ſometimes found myſelf carried away by carnal fears, and proud reaſonings. I reſolved to be ſilent in the company I was to meet, if I might not be ſerviceable; and have found this evening the need and difficulty of being ſo; GOD grant me the ſpirit of meekneſs and charity."

Wedneſday, June 30.—" I find it exceeding difficult to hold communion with GOD, when not more immediately engaged in miniſterial duties. *Converſation this day has been rather about Religion than Religious.* I want more of CHRIST's temper of meekneſs, having reaſon to ſuſpect myſelf too ſolicitous when blamed unjuſtly. I ſee how vain it is to think of gaining CHRIST without forſaking all. Lord, make me more and more dead to the world."

Monday, July 5.—" I was ſtriving much in prayer laſt night and this morning for a ſenſe of the ſinfulneſs of ſin. My heart ſeems to have been quickened by it through the day, to keep a little cloſe with GOD: yet how often have I forgotten him! O that I could love him more! I have been kept pretty much from fear reſpecting an approaching trial, being poſſeſſed with a deſire of profeſſing CHRIST, with ſome confidence in his protection, and with compaſſion toward gainſayers. I have ſeen this day how needful it is to watch againſt a party-ſpirit, and to love all that love CHRIST, leaving them to their own opinions, and to avoid love-deſtroying debates. I was rather affected, than piouſly devout in the prayers at a funeral.—I ought to guard againſt a ſort of deſponding thoughts from external circumſtances; and from carnal proud reaſonings in my own heart."

Wednesday, July 7.—" Frame disordered at walking, though otherwise when I lay down. My comfort is, my salvation depends not on me, but CHRIST, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, though I am so changeable.—Do I choose GOD for my portion? If so, why do I forget him so often, and think of him so coldly?"

Monday, July 26.—" On reflection, I see my safest way is sitting down and abiding in the place I am called to. When absent from it, though in the way of duty, I do not so well retain the possession of my own mind.—This day I observed at waking, as I have often done, that the application of my heart to think on GOD was rather by force, it was not easy to keep him in view, though I had so many causes of thankfulness.—I have been engaged all this day in some needful service; yet find myself apt to seek my own pleasure even in doing GOD's work. I ought to be more sensible of the importance of my office, and to depend upon and pray more earnestly for the influences of GOD's Spirit on myself and labours. To be humble in the sense of my vileness, and to believe the sufficiency of CHRIST, I find the two hardest things I have to attain."

Tuesday, August 10.—" This Club-day. I have not found such desire after it as formerly. This is a great fault. I am not thankful as I ought for such friends and opportunities: nor do I meet them with suitable desires of receiving and communicating good. I should regard the Club as a distinguished blessing, and as laying me under peculiar obligations; and be continually influenced by the expectations which the world has from us. GOD has removed some outward trials I have been under; yet I would remember that CHRIST is our peace."

Wednesday, Aug. 11.—" Apt to wander in family prayer. My state is of very low advancement; more especially this

appears

appears by the infrequent applications of my heart to GOD; a true ſpirituality of temper I ſuſpect I need for this reaſon; and that ſuſpicion demands my ſtricteſt inquiry.—Laſt week when in trials, I ſeem to have been better than this when out of them: let me inquire, whether I am driven to CHRIST by neceſſity or drawn by love."

Monday, Aug. 23.—" The devotions of this morning were ſhortened by the expectation of buſineſs. Somewhat like this often happens, and demands my greater attention.—Great experience this day of a corrupted heart; though not ſignally overcome, yet not watchful as I ought."

Tueſday, Aug. 24.—" Public duty encroached on the morning's private exerciſe.—Had this day for ſome hours a peculiar fear of falling away: I obſerved the actings of faith were weak; yet could not get them lively: ſeemed however determined for GOD in CHRIST.—I am certainly influenced by a principle which makes me not unwatchful againſt ſin, and not altogether unready to duty: but is it from the right motive, faith working by love?—Greatly wanting in thankfulneſs."

June 6, 1757.—I am well ſatisfied the deſire of eſteem, or fear of men, hath too much influence on my conduct. Lord, turn the fear of mens faces into a love of their ſouls."

WE now come to finiſh this account of Mr. Walker's Life and Miniſtry by ſhewing his behaviour during his laſt illneſs, and what ſupport he found from Religion, while in the near views of approaching death. This, it will be confeſſed on all hands, is a ſcene in which the truth and ſincerity of a man's religion is put to the teſt. To diſarm the king of terrors of every appearance of horror, and to

welcome his ſummons as a call from a vain and miſerable world to a world of endleſs and unſpeakable felicity, is the ſole property of a firm faith in the GOD and Father of our Lord JESUS CHRIST, who according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the reſurrection of JESUS CHRIST from the dead. Now, as our Author perceived his ſoul to be greatly ſtrengthened and eſtabliſhed in grace, the nearer he advanced towards eternity, ſo will the atteſtation of this matter of fact, which was ground of comfort to himſelf, be to others a ſpecial confirmation of the truths he maintained, when they are aſſured that under the influence of them he finiſhed his days in peace, and committed his ſoul and body into the hands of GOD, without the leaſt doubt of being received into an happy immortality.

After the 27th of *April*, in the year 1760, as was before obſerved, Mr. Walker was diſabled from performing any farther ſervice in the public congregation. At this time he was ſeized with a fever, which confined him ſeveral weeks to his room at *Truro*: when he had in ſome degree recovered his ſtrength after the abatement of the fever, a cough ſtill hung upon him, for which, as it foreboded a conſumption, he was ordered to *Briſtol* for the uſe of the waters in the month of *Auguſt*. Having ſtaid two months there with little or no benefit, he went in the Autumn to *Kington*, in *Warwickſhire*, with an intention of ſpending ſome time with the Rev. Mr. Talbot, Vicar of that pariſh; but, a bad ſeaſon of the year coming on, he was ordered back to the *Briſtol* wells. There he continued till the middle of *December*, when it was judged proper that he ſhould be removed to ſome dry healthy ſpot in the neighbourhood of *London*, where he could enjoy the benefit of a good air. Upon this, having before been invited by the Earl of Dartmouth to try the air at

Blackheath,

Blackheath, he went thither a few days before *Chriſtmas.* Being ſituated in a place ſo near *London* he had an opportunity of having the beſt advice, but it was not in the power of medicine to ſtop the progreſs of his diſeaſe. It is worthy our notice to obſerve how remarkably the Providence of GOD raiſed up friends to ſupply his ſeveral wants throughout his illneſs. After reſigning the Vicarage of *Talland,* the Curacy of *Truro* was the whole of his income. The pay was but ſmall, and his expences were neceſſarily increaſed to a great degree by a long continued ſickneſs. But he had reſigned himſelf into the hands of GOD, and found the promiſe verified that he *never will forſake thoſe* who commit themſelves to the care of his Fatherly protection, Pſalm xxxvii. 25. Matt. vi. 33. Being in the houſe of the Earl and Counteſs of Dartmouth, he had all the aſſiſtance that his critical ſituation could require. Preſents alſo were conveyed to him from his friends at *Truro,* and at other places, whoſe love to him was ſuch, that they were ready to have furniſhed him with whatever ſupplies of money he might have ſtood in need of. And to the honour of thoſe gentlemen of the faculty who were conſulted, it muſt be recorded, that as ſoon as they were ſeverally appriſed of the circumſtances of their patient, they not only gave their attendance gratis, but ſeemed to take delight in offering him their ſervice.

It appeared to be ordered by a peculiar appointment of divine Providence, that Mr. Walker, after he had finiſhed his miniſtry at *Truro,* ſhould abide a conſiderable time in the large and populous city of *Briſtol,* and that he ſhould afterwards ſpend the laſt ſeven months of his life in the neighbourhood of the great metropolis. Several ſerious perſons, both of the Clergy and Laity, in and about *London* and *Briſtol,* viſited him frequently in his illneſs,

to whom his converſation was bleſſed in a very ſingular manner. By his knowledge and experience he was eminently qualified to lead others to an acquaintance with their own hearts, and to the diſcovery of the comforts and privileges of the Goſpel, as well as to inſtruct miniſters in the faithful diſcharge of their important office; ſo that, when bodily weakneſs prevented him from preaching any more in public, by his talent in converſing, in which he remarkably excelled, he was made inſtrumental in promoting the glory of GOD, and the good of many ſouls. He continued to the very laſt, whenever his ſtrength would enable him to ſpeak, to give ſuitable exhortations to thoſe that were about him.

With regard to his own experiences in this laſt and languid ſeaſon of his life, of which he frequently ſpake to thoſe about him, he complained in general of great deadneſs of ſpiritual affections, and of the abſence of all ſenſible impreſſions of joy and delight in the contemplation of the exceeding love of GOD towards him, and of his approaching happy change. As he diſavowed in principle any dependence upon religious frames, as a recommendation to GOD's favour, thinking it a ſcheme which ſavours too much of ſelf-righteouſneſs, and had learnt to caſt his whole confidence upon the promiſes of GOD freely offered in the Goſpel of CHRIST to ſinners, convinced of their guilt and helpleſsneſs; ſo he was quite contented and eaſy in his mind under the want of thoſe ſenſations. But it is reaſonable to ſuppoſe that the coldneſs and deadneſs of his affections was in a great meaſure, if not wholly, owing to the extreme weak ſtate of his body. An inward burning fever, attended with profuſe night-ſweats, had waſted his vital ſtrength; a ſtubborn cough continually hung upon him, neither his food nor his medicines did him any ſervice; a general languor oppreſſed his whole frame,

frame, and his ſpirits were reduced to a very low ſtate. At thoſe times when the powers of nature failed him moſt, he was wont to break out into ſuch expreſſions as theſe; "What a miſerable creature ſhould I be in my preſent ſituation, if I could not look upon GOD as my Covenant-God, my reconciled Father in CHRIST? The weakneſs of my body and of my ſpirits deprives me of all joyous ſenſations; but my faith in GOD's promiſes, I bleſs the Lord, is firm and unſhaken What though my loſs of ſtrength and ſpirits robs me of all comfortable communion with GOD, the promiſes are not therefore made void. *Abraham* believed, and it was counted to him for righteouſneſs. I believe that GOD is faithful and true in all his declarations of mercy, which I have ſought for, though I cannot now feel the impreſſions of his love."

Upon ſeveral occaſions he was heard to ſay, "I bleſs GOD that upon the cloſeſt review of my life, for theſe ten years paſt, I can ſee evident marks of my having lived with a ſingle eye to the glory of GOD, in oppoſition to the ſelfiſhneſs of my nature." And likewiſe,

"The nearer I advance towards eternity, the more I am confirmed in the truth of the doctrines which I have preached and publiſhed. I am ſure they will ſtand the teſt of the laſt day. Conviction of ſin, original as well as actual, is the grand inlet to all ſaving knowledge; where this is wanting, the ſuperſtructure will not ſtand; but if this foundation be deeply laid, the heart will then welcome the glad tidings of ſalvation."

Upon the whole we may obſerve, that under a continued abſence of all ſenſible comfort he poſſeſſed his ſoul in the moſt ſettled, abiding, ſolid peace, never admitting the leaſt doubt of his acceptance with GOD.

Nothing

Nothing was more remarkable in him than the conſtant, even, and undiſturbed tranquility which he maintained under the frequent changes that attended his diſorder. It ſometimes happened that upon an alteration of his medicines there appeared hope of his recovery: at ſuch times he was obſerved to take delight in the proſpect of returning to the exerciſe of his miniſtry among his people at *Truro*, of whom he never ſpake without evident tokens of ſingular pleaſure and ſatisfaction in them; ſometimes not without tears of affection, and tender concern for the welfare of their ſouls. When theſe ſhort-lived hopes were vaniſhed, and the dangerous ſymptoms of his diſorder returned, no alteration appeared in the frame of his mind: he only turned his views to the awful ſcene that called for his more immediate attention, and ſpake with equal delight of the joys reſerved beyond the grave for the faithful ſervants of the living GOD. It never could be diſcovered that he deſired to live, or wiſhed to die. His ſoul was all ſubmiſſion to the will of his heavenly Father, and his whole concern ſeemed to be, to preſerve that temper of mind, wherein he might have ſaid with St. *Paul, None of us liveth to himſelf, and no man dieth to himſelf. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord, and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore or die, we are the Lord's.*

His patience was not worn out, but ſtrengthened and increaſed by the continuation and increaſe of his ſufferings. If at any time, which ſeldom happened, an expreſſion had eſcaped his lips, that ſeemed to ſavour of fretfulneſs or impatience, he was obſerved to check and reprove himſelf: at the laſt, indeed, *patience* appeared to have *had her perfect work*; for nothing of this kind was diſcovered in him for ſome time before his death.

What

What he endured within the laſt ſix weeks from an inward parching heat, is almoſt inexpreſſible. His only apprehenſions under theſe trying circumſtances were, leſt his patience ſhould not hold out, and that he ſhould wiſh for a releaſe ſooner than GOD ſhould ſee fit to grant it. But the Lord was pleaſed to preſerve in him a ſpirit of reſignation to the laſt.

To this view of his behaviour in this his laſt ſcene I ſhall ſubjoin two letters, written by him to his neareſt and moſt intimate friend at *Truro*. The former is dated fifteen days, the latter but five, before his death.

" *My deareſt, moſt faithful Friend,*

" MY diſorder, though by no means affording to myſelf the leaſt proſpect of recovery, yet ſeems to affect me at preſent more with weakneſs, than with that violent heat, which rendered me incapable of all thought. I can now, bleſſed be GOD, think a little, and with what comfort do I both receive your thoughts, and communicate mine to you! O! my dear friend, what do we owe to the Lord for one another! more than I could have conceived, had not GOD ſent me to die elſewhere. We ſhall have time to praiſe the Lord when we meet in the other world. I ſtand and look upon that bleſſed world with an eſtabliſhed heart: I ſee the way prepared, opened, and aſſured to me in JESUS CHRIST: and for ever bleſſed be the name of GOD, that I can look upon death, that introduces that glorious ſcene, without any kind of fear. I find my grand duty ſtill is *ſubmiſſion* as to time and circumſtances. Why ſhould not I ſay to you, that I find nothing come ſo near my heart, as the fear leſt my will ſhould thwart GOD's in any circumſtance; here I think I am enabled to watch and pray in ſome poor meaſure. Well, my dear friend, I am but ſtepping a little before you.

you. You will ſoon alſo get your releaſe, and there we ſhall triumph for ever in the name, and love, and power of the Lamb. Adieu; yours in the Lord JESUS CHRIST for ever. *Amen.*

Blackheath, July 4, 1761. S. W.

" *My deareſt Friend,*

" WITH great confuſion of thought, I have no doubts, great confidence, great ſubmiſſion, no complaining.

" The great thing, which I always feared, is, I believe, coming upon me; that I am coming into a diarrhœa, confined to my bed, and have no ſtrength.

" As to actual views of the joys that are coming, I have none; but a ſtedfaſt belief of them in CHRIST.

" What I have found in myſelf for months, both as to the review of time paſt, and the preſent workings of the Spirit, has left me without all doubt of my union with CHRIST, *&c.*

Blackheath, July 14, 1761. S. W."

On the *Tueſday* morning he dictated the above letter, for at that time he was not able to hold a pen in his hand. A few hours after the ſymptoms of his approaching diſſolution began to ſhew themſelves, his throat rattled, a cold clammy ſweat ran down his cheeks, and the muſcles of his arms and face appeared to be convulſed with frequent ſpaſms and contractions. His heart, to uſe his own expreſſion, ſeemed to him to be tied round with thongs. He ſtill ſpake of theſe preſages of his death with the utmoſt calmneſs and compoſure, and begged of his friends about him that they would pray for him, that he might hold out with patience unto the end. It being obſerved by one of them ſitting on his bedſide what a

bleſſing

bleſſing he enjoyed in his preſent ſituation, that his ſoul was ripe for heaven and eternity, he interrupted him with ſaying, " That the body of ſin was not yet done away, but that he ſhould continue a ſinner to the laſt gaſp, and deſired that he would pray for him as ſuch." Thus lowly and humbly did he think of himſelf even under all his attainments in grace. In this lingering manner he continued the five or ſix laſt days, without any other viſible alteration in his body than gradually growing weaker.

But notwithſtanding all his former deadneſs and dryneſs of ſoul which he complained of, it pleaſed GOD to ſhed abroad in his heart a lively ſenſe of his love and favour, and a ſtrong foretaſte of heavenly joy before he took him to the enjoyment of himſelf. On the *Thurſday*, ſtarting up from an apparent fit of dozing, he took hold of his nurſe by the hand, who was ſitting near him, and uttered this rapturous expreſſion; " I have been upon the wings of the cherubim; heaven has in a manner been opened to me; I ſhall be ſoon there myſelf, and am only ſorry that I cannot take you with me." The next day, while a young Clergyman, who came from a diſtant part of the country to viſit his departing friend, was ſtanding near his bedſide, he lift up his eyes in a manner that beſpoke a joy more than words could utter, and addreſſed him thus, " O! my friend, had I ſtrength to ſpeak, I could tell you ſuch news, as would rejoice your very ſoul: I have had ſuch views of heaven—But I am not able to ſay more."

On the *Saturday* his voice faltered exceedingly, and his head ſeemed rather to ramble. We ſcarce imagined he could have lived out the day, and indeed had he not been a remarkable ſtrong made man, it is not conceivable that he could have ſupported it ſo long under ſo ſevere and

and fatiguing an illneſs. He paſſed the night however in extreme weakneſs; and about nine o'clock the next morning, it pleaſed GOD to releaſe him from all his ſufferings.

The evident concern of ſome of his particular friends upon the increaſe of his diſorder, ſometimes affected him; on which account, thinking, it is probable, that the ſight of his laſt agonies might give them pain, he one day ſaid to a ſervant that attended him, "I would I might ſlip away, when nobody but you ſhould be preſent;" and ſo indeed it fell out, for juſt when all except that perſon had left the room, not apprehending him to be ſo very near his end, he turned his head aſide on the pillow, and nature appearing to be quite exhauſted, without any other token than a ſigh ſomething longer, and more deep than uſual, his ſoul was delivered from the priſon of the body.

He departed this life in a lodging-houſe at *Blackheath*, to which he had been removed a few weeks before, on *Sunday July* 19, 1761, in the forty-eighth year of his age, and entered upon his ſabbath of eternal reſt.

It was his particular direction that his body ſhould be interred in the church-yard of the pariſh in which he died. In compliance therewith, he was buried in the church-yard of *Lewiſham*, in the county of *Kent*.

From the foregoing account, the attentive Reader may draw the two following reflections.

Firſt, That a life of conformity to the goſpel of JESUS CHRIST is not what ſome, in excuſe for their own coldneſs and negligence, repreſent it to be: they endeavour to perſuade themſelves and others that it is an impracticable plan, and inconſiſtent with many of the moſt reaſonable and neceſſary employments. If ſuch perſons would fairly attend to the motions of their own minds, they would

would probably find, that the true ground of their objection is the fear of ſingularity, the dread of being thought weak enough to be led away by the craft of men who lie in wait to deceive, not conſidering that at the very ſame time they are manifeſtly enſlaved to popular opinion, and want the courage to think for themſelves.

Secondly, That a life of conformity to goſpel principles is the pleaſanteſt life that can be led upon earth: it would be difficult indeed to convey an exact idea of its peculiar joys and delights, to thoſe who neither have, nor deſire to have any experience of them, but all who know what it is to *love the Lord Jeſus Chriſt in ſincerity*, know that our bleſſed Maſter does not *now leave* his diſciples *comfortleſs*, nor require any ſervice from them but what is itſelf the moſt perfect freedom. If true happineſs conſiſts in ſolid tranquility and peace of mind, they only can enjoy it whoſe hearts and lives are unfeignedly devoted to GOD. *Great peace have they that love thy law*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt. *Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth, give I unto you*, ſaith the Saviour: but alas! *there is no peace, ſaith my God, to the wicked.* The *proud*, whom GOD *reſiſteth, the covetous, whom God abhorreth*, the envious, the uncharitable, the careleſs and ſelf-confident, the unthankful and unholy, all in general *that know not God, and obey not the goſpel of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, will probably find, when the trying hour of diſſolution comes, if they do not experience it already, that they *are like the troubled ſea when it cannot reſt, whoſe waters caſt up mire and dirt:* it was not ſo with him of whom we have been ſpeaking, he was calm and undiſturbed under various affecting trials, and when death approached, *rejoiced in hope of the glory of God.*

To conclude, if there be any among my readers who *cruelly, diſdainfully, and deſpitefully ſpeak againſt the righteous*,

ous, who have wantonly or maliciously contributed to load with disgrace and contempt this or any other of the faithful ministers or serious followers of the blessed JESUS; if there be any who, being *led away by the error of the wicked*, take pleasure in deriding those that *pass the time of their sojourning here in fear*, and consider this world as a dangerous wilderness, that lies in their way to a land of rest and peace, wherein an everlasting inheritance is provided for them, let me intreat such persons to reflect that a day is coming, when the understandings of men shall be freed from mistake and misapprehension, and all things shall appear in their true light. *Then*, to use the words of a pious Author, *shall the righteous man stand in great boldness before the face of such as have afflicted him, and made no account of his labours. When they see it they shall be troubled with terrible fear, and shall be amazed at the strangeness of his salvation, so far beyond all that they looked for. And they, repenting and groaning for anguish of spirit, shall say within themselves, This was he whom we had sometimes in derision and a proverb of reproach. We fools accounted his life madness, and his end to be without honour. How is he numbered among the children of God, and his lot is among the saints? Therefore have we erred from the way of truth*, &c. Wisdom of Solomon, v. 1, &c.

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law doth he meditate day and night, Psalm i. 1, 2. May this blessing be the happy portion of all into whose hands these sheets may come! may the GOD and Father of our Lord JESUS CHRIST, who can work by the weakest and most unworthy of his servants, vouchsafe to make them instrumental to promote his

glory

glory and the good of immortal ſouls! May every one that ſhall read the following Diſcourſes, be led into the knowledge and love of thoſe enlivening truths, which animated our Author both in life and at death, and filled him with *a well grounded hope of everlaſting ſalvation.* May the law of GOD inwardly applied to his ſoul beget in him a deep conviction of ſin, and *lead him, as a ſchoolmaſter, unto* CHRIST the Saviour; that *being juſtified by faith,* he may *have peace with God,* bring forth *fruit unto holineſs,* and in the end obtain everlaſting life. *Amen.*

OXFORD,
June 15, 1763. J. S.

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SER-

SERMON I.

LECTURES on the CHURCH CATECHISM.

ACTS xvi. 30.

What muſt I do to be ſaved?

THE importance of the inquiry ſuggeſted in theſe words is undeniable. The perſon that ſpake them was the jailer, who, being duly affected with the miraculous power and preſence of GOD, (which ſhook the foundations of the priſon in which Paul and Silas were confined) was brought to a deep concern about the condition of his ſoul, which drew from him this importunate queſtion, *What muſt I do to be ſaved?* It would be abſurd to imagine the inquiry does not as well become us as him. It were well if every ſoul of us were brought to make it with his earneſtneſs and purpoſe of heart. But however that be, to give a full anſwer to it will not be amiſs. It may, by the bleſſing of GOD, beget that concern upon the hearts of thoſe who continue inſenſible in their ſins, which their unhappy caſe moſt loudly calls for; while at the ſame time it will direct thoſe who are ſeeking eternal life into a more perfect knowledge of the way of ſalvation.

My design is to attempt the resolution of this interesting matter, in an Explication of our Church Catechism, during the Sunday afternoons of this summer *. And I am confident, if due attendance and attention be given hereto, none of you will think the matters contained in this little summary to have been so easy to be understood as not to need thought and explanation, nor of so small importance as not to deserve it.

It will be proper to introduce the explanation intended by this general remark on the design of the Catechism; which, properly conceived, will serve as a key to open to us what is contained in it; namely, "That this Catechism does, as all other Christian "Catechisms must do, relate intirely to the religion "of fallen lost man." The matter this Catechism explains, is not what as gracious persons we must do to keep GOD's favour, but what as sinners must be done in us and by us to obtain it: not simply what, as in a state of integrity, we must do to be happy, but what, as in a state of ruin, we must do to be saved. If you think it contains an account of the religion of works, you are altogether beside the matter, cannot understand one syllable it says, and however you may have a certain kind of knowledge respecting the Christian doctrines herein set before you, yet you have still all to learn as to the salvation of your soul in the belief of them. I beseech you, therefore, beware you do not stumble at the threshold, and, by imagining you must be saved by your own doings, overset the covenant of grace, (which is no longer such if our merits

* These Sermons were preached at Truro in Cornwall, in the year 1759.

are

are set up as the cause of our acceptance with GOD) and so render the redemption that is in CHRIST quite a needless thing; and, what may not be at first thought of, not only faith, but also repentance, the sacraments, and in short all means of grace, absolutely impertinent. The Catechism supposes you to be an apostate creature, and, as such, undone and helpless, incapable in yourself of recovering GOD's favour, or of returning to him. It proceeds intirely on this supposition, that you are in a fallen state, explaining to you the method which the mercy of GOD hath provided for your remedy, how you are called to it, and by what means you may be made effectually a partaker of it. Now this being laid down, I proceed to observe from it, for the better understanding of the Church Catechism,

I. That it is a summary of that whole salvation for fallen creatures, which is in the Redeemer JESUS CHRIST. Every part of it has the most direct eye to Him, as the All in All of lost fallen man. The baptismal covenant is entirely founded in his merits; the baptismal renunciation stands upon his kingdom and grace; the Christian faith points him out to us as the Author of all our pardon, acceptance, and fellowship with GOD in time and eternity; the law in the Ten Commandments sets him before us as our righteousness, and the procurer of that grace, by which we are restored to that image of God, and conformity to his blessed nature and will, which is the substance of the law; prayer finally, and the sacraments, which are the means of our access unto GOD as our father, and of our receiving from him the full assurance of his love and favour, with all needful supplies of his Spirit; these

these are no otherwise acceptable to GOD, or profitable to us, but in the faith of JESUS CHRIST, and through his mediation. CHRIST then is the sum of this Catechism, even CHRIST *of* GOD *made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.* Wretched expositors therefore of this Catechism are they, who, by passing over lightly the fall of man, by failing to explain the deep apostasy of our nature, and therein our absolute guilt and insufficiency to all good, (artfully, wickedly, and with the most barefaced disingenuity, either saying nothing about them at all, or what only might serve to make people think these were points of uncertainty, and of no moment) have knowingly and wilfully overturned the design which the Reformers had in the Catechism; hid from mens eyes those doctrines which the true Church of England thinks to be essentially necessary to salvation; and effectually struck CHRIST out of the whole of it as to his being the righteousness and strength, the now living head and the future glorious reward of his people.

II. I take notice farther, for the better knowledge of what is to be expected in the Catechism, that it not only goes upon the supposition of our being fallen, lost, helpless creatures, and of redemption wrought out by JESUS CHRIST, as the only means of recovery; but, supposing also that we own the one and the other, it does only explain how it is that we lost creatures are called to this salvation, and upon what condition it is made effectually ours. It supposes you to be in a lost state by nature, explains to you what that lost state is, and taking it for granted you would be glad to be delivered out of it, and that there is but one way whereby you

you can be so, namely, by JESUS CHRIST, opens to you very fully what that salvation is, and what, as a Christian, lies on your part that you may have the whole benefit of it. You are not therefore to look here for any proofs of your "being by nature born in "sin, and a child of wrath;" it tells you, upon GOD's authority, that you are so, and supposes you sensible of it; nor does it go about to convince you by arguments, that *there is no other name under heaven whereby you must be saved*, but only the name of our Lord JESUS CHRIST; that, as an instruction provided in the visible church professing the name of CHRIST, it sets forth as a truth not to be questioned. It is simply an instruction for lost sinners in the way of salvation that is in JESUS CHRIST; and whoever doth not know himself a fallen lost creature, and desire salvation by CHRIST JESUS only, can get no saving good from it.—I observe farther, for the better understanding the scope of the Catechism,

III. That it sets forth faith as the means of our being made effectually partakers of the salvation that is in CHRIST, namely, that true faith, which engages to a renunciation and forsaking of all the ways of sin, and is a principle of obedience to GOD's holy will and commandments, and actually enables to the one and the other of these by the grace of GOD waited for and given in the use of prayer and the sacraments. And farther, that it also sets out baptism as the first sealing ordinance, confirming all the promises of GOD unto us upon such our faith, and giving us what may perhaps be called a charter-title, which will have obligatory force when we do so believe, and in the mean

time calls upon us to do so. This is the substance of the Church Catechism, and may shew you the general plan upon which it is drawn up, namely, that since we are fallen and lost creatures, and GOD has prepared salvation for us in JESUS CHRIST, the only way we can have that salvation effectually ours, is by a true faith begotten in us by the Holy Spirit, powerful to the mortification of sin, and enabling us to live unto GOD. This is the Christian covenant sealed by baptism, and this view of it accounts for the several parts of the Church Catechism; namely,

1. The union of true believers with CHRIST, and therein their adoption to be GOD's children in this life, and title to an inheritance in the kingdom of heaven hereafter.

2. The baptismal vow, which is a solemn profession of faith in GOD through JESUS CHRIST wrought by the operation of the Holy Ghost; of their renouncing the devil, the world, and the flesh; and of their obligation and purpose to keep GOD's holy will and commandments, and to walk in the same all the days of their life.

3. Prayer and the sacraments; the former, for confirming this faith in us; the latter, for assuring to us the promises of GOD in CHRIST upon such our faith, as also for building us up therein. In these three things lies the whole substance of the Catechism: whereby you see that the merit of CHRIST is the cause of all hope towards and acceptance with GOD; and faith in him the only way or means of our being made partakers thereof.

Having

Having now ascertained the scheme upon which the Catechism of the Church of England is planned, I come to speak of the first part of it abovementioned, The privileges sealed to believers in baptism; namely, they are therein made, in a covenant way, "members "of CHRIST, children of GOD, and inheritors of the "kingdom of heaven." These privileges are sealed to believers in baptism. And if only to believers, how then are they said to belong to infants who are incapable of faith, while nevertheless children are taught to say, that in their baptism they were made members of CHRIST, children of GOD, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven? We allow the baptizing of infants, because we judge we have GOD's warrant and command for it; and inasmuch as the children of parents professing themselves Christians are relatively and federally a holy seed, (the promise evidently and expressly reaching unto them as well as their parents) inasmuch as by baptism they are made members of the visible church, and have a right to all the external privileges of the church equally with any others; and inasmuch as also when they are brought to baptism they do make profession of the true faith by their proxies; therefore here, as well as in the Office for baptising infants, they are spoken of, in common with all others who have partaken of baptism, as believers and regenerate, and consequently as having a sealed right in all the blessings of the covenant of grace: I say, for these reasons they are spoken of as true believers and regenerate persons; not that they actually are so, or indeed can be, till the gift of GOD, namely, Faith, by the operation of the Holy Ghost, through the hearing of

the word, shall be granted unto them; when, (and not before, though baptized) they are effectually made living members of CHRIST, children of GOD, and heirs of heaven; and when their baptism comes to have its full force, sealing and confirming to them all the blessings of the gospel as theirs in the most absolute and complete manner. Yet, in the mean time, since infants, children of Christian parents, have by birth a title to Christian privileges, so far forth as their case requires, and since by their baptism they are admitted into the number of GOD's professing people; therefore, though by their baptism they may not be said to have these privileges in a covenant way, sealed to them as theirs in the proper power and influence of that initiating seal; yet thereby they have what, for distinction-sake, I may be allowed to call a charter-title to them; their name is by baptism put into the charter-grant of Christian privileges, which they may plead, as fully engaging a gracious and faithful God to them, whenever they attain unto true faith.—Now such their charter-right to the great blessings of being made, in this way, by baptism members of CHRIST, children of GOD, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven, they are here put in mind of; and that with this design, that being sensible of the greatness of these blessings, and of the right they have in them, if they make use of it, they may be immediately stirred up to do so.—And in order to their being moved hereunto as they grow in years, it is first the duty of parents, sponsors and ministers, to explain to them, and secondly, of the young persons themselves to consider, the importance of these gospel blessings, and the right they have in them, to the

the end that by a true faith, fruitful of gospel holiness, they may be brought by the grace of GOD to make out their claim to them as good and effectual.

First, It is the duty of parents, sponsors, and ministers, to explain unto children, as they become capable of understanding them, the great importance of these gospel privileges, and the right they have in them; in order to move them unto the making out their claim and right by true faith and repentance. It is a justice we owe to CHRIST, to our little ones, to our own souls, that we should take every measure for instructing them in, and for recommending to them the excellency of these blessings. The incomparable value we set upon them ourselves, evident before our children in the influence they have on our whole conduct, should teach them; and our carefulness in taking every opportunity of opening to them the sense and force of these riches of CHRIST, should be perpetually exciting them to make their interest in them sure. Whether Parents, Sureties, or Ministers, (and indeed the same may be said of the whole Church) we should be by conduct and instruction explaining and recommending to them what a glorious thing it is to be a *Member of* CHRIST, joined to the Son of GOD the SAVIOUR, the only Saviour of the world, in whom there is all we can want or wish, all the treasures of pardon, grace and glory; a *Child of* GOD, no longer a child of wrath; an outcast from the divine favour, an object of GOD's displeasure, but a child of the high and living GOD, a child whom he loves with that infinite tenderness which is peculiar to himself; a child whom he does and will care for; whom he loves

to keep in his everlasting arms, and delights to have continually in his sight; an *Inheritor of the kingdom of heaven*; a child, and therefore an heir, no longer an heir of hell, as once when he was not in CHRIST, but now an heir of the everlasting kingdom of heaven; an heir, growing up to the possession of his inheritance every day; an heir, who shall shortly be in his Father's house and family, past death, past sin, past sorrow, happy, blessed, glorious for ever and ever. I say, it is our duty to explain and recommend these glorious things to our little ones, and by all possible means to stir them up unto the suing for that faith, by means of which, great as these blessings are, they shall be made effectually theirs.

Secondly, It is the duty of all young persons, who are called to these important blessings, seriously to lay them to heart, as they become capable of doing so; and continually to pray unto GOD to give them grace, that by a true faith their title in them may be made good and effectual. Dear children, I beseech you, endeavour to be sensible yourselves how great these blessings are, and how much you need them. Do not you know that you are by nature born in sin and children of wrath? Can you think any thing in the whole world so terrible as that natural state of yours? And will ye be willing to continue in it? What, are ye willing that GOD shall be angry with you all the while you live, and, when you die, cast you into the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone? GOD forbid this should be your case. No. There are better things prepared for you. GOD has sent his only-begotten Son from heaven to save you from this state of sin and wrath. And

GOD hath called you to partake of all this salvation, and given you, as it were under his hand, a right to it, if ye use that right. And will ye not use it? O, my dear children, what a blessed thing will it be for you to have CHRIST for your CHRIST! O, if ye once have but CHRIST for your CHRIST, ye need fear nothing. Only get CHRIST, and ye will fear nothing. Ye will not fear the devil, though he be the roaring lion, that walketh about seeking to devour you. Ye will not fear death, which every body else is afraid of. And then, ye will not fear thunder nor lightning, nor any other thing ye are now so much afraid of. No; if ye have CHRIST once, ye will fear nothing: for then GOD will be your Father. And you know GOD is able to do for you, for he made every thing. And if he be your Father, then to be sure he loves you, yes, a great deal more than your own father and mother, and he will do every thing for you, and will not suffer you to be hurt by any thing. And do not you know that GOD never dies, though you do? He will be alive when you are dead; and, if you belong to CHRIST, he will give you a far better world than this is; pleasures a great deal better than any you can have here; and every thing better without comparison. Why, heaven will be yours. O, I am thinking how happy ye will be when ye get to heaven. There ye will be like the angels of GOD; there ye will be glorified saints; there ye will stand at the right hand of GOD (and who then shall be able to hurt you?) There ye will be singing praises to GOD with thousands of thousands of saints and angels; there ye will not die any more, nor be sick any more, nor be afraid of any thing any more. And how long will ye be there? Not

for a little while, but for ever. O how happy will ye be when ye get to heaven! Now therefore think of these things, my dear children. Do not let the love of play and pleasure make you forget them. CHRIST is far better for you than all the pleasure and all the play, nay, than all the fine clothes, and all the fine sights, and all the fine things in the world together.

Think of these things, and be sure you pray to GOD every day to make you mind them, and make you love them. The devil wants to have you, and he will be trying all he can to make you forget them; but GOD is stronger than the devil; and if you pray unto him, he will make you remember them, and will put them into your hearts, and will by his Holy Spirit make you, who are by nature born in sin and the children of wrath, members of CHRIST, children of GOD, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven.

SERMON II.

ACTS xvi. 30.

What must I do to be saved?

IN and by baptism believers have sealed to them a covenant-right in the glorious privileges of membership in CHRIST, adoption into GOD's family as children, and inheritance in the kingdom of heaven. And baptism, which does thus, in a covenant-way, seal these privileges to believers, does, in what was called

called a charter-way, seal them to baptized infants, so that it lies upon themselves, coming to years, to make out their claim to these things by a true faith wrought in them by the Spirit of GOD. Accordingly the *question* immediately following is, "What did your god-"fathers and godmothers then for you?" that is, in your name, as representing you, and acting for you.

Answer. "They did promise and vow three things "in my name, *First*, That I should renounce the devil "and all his works, the pomps and vanities of this "wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh. "*Secondly*, That I should believe all the articles of "the Christian Faith. And, *Thirdly*, That I should "keep GOD's holy will and commandments, and walk "in the same all the days of my life." All this, (which in fewer words is but truly to believe, to wit, by that divine faith, in the power of which we die unto sin and live unto GOD) they promised and vowed, not as what I was *then* to do, for I was at that time incapable, but what I should *hereafter* do when I grew up to years of discretion, and live in the practice of all my days. And I am perfectly satisfied, that, if I do this, I am indeed a member of CHRIST, a child of GOD, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven, my baptism, in that case, being GOD's seal of indenture, as it were, and obligation, whereby he conveys and makes over to me, in full right, all these blessings, engaging himself, by contract and covenant thus sealed and executed, to make them good to me. But I know also, that, if I do not this which they promised and vowed for me, and until I do it, these blessings are not mine; neither had my baptism at the time, simply and of itself,

force

force effectually to make and seal me member of CHRIST, child of GOD, and inheritor of the kingdom of heaven. So that I see my having a real right in these things, and my being able to look upon them as mine, in virtue of my baptism conveying and sealing them to me, doth depend upon my believing and doing this which my godfathers and godmothers promised for me. The *Question* therefore coming next after is, "Dost thou not think that thou art bound to believe "and to do what thy godfathers and godmothers pro-"mised for thee?" The *Answer* to which is; "Yes "verily, and by GOD's help so I will. And I heartily "thank our heavenly Father, that he hath called me "to this state of salvation, through JESUS CHRIST "our Saviour. And I pray unto GOD to give me "his grace, that I may continue in the same unto my "life's end." Having proceeded thus far in the recital of the Catechism, it may be advisable to speak to this latter question and answer here, both that we may have before us a general account of what we are to expect in the baptismal vow, as well as that, in the particular explanation thereof, the Creed and Commandments may appear the more clearly to be but parts of it, being proceeded to without interruption immediately after that the renunciation of the devil, world, and flesh, shall have been opened; and also, that the obligation to baptismal engagements (being considered immediately after baptismal benefits, and seen as absolutely necessary to be performed in order to a real and saving right in such blessings) may be stated in its full force, and be brought with its proper power upon the mind.

Now

Now in the *Question* and *Answer* before us, I observe,

I. That the person questioned is supposed to be instructed in the nature of gospel blessings, and his own want of them: for he speaks of a state of salvation through JESUS CHRIST the Saviour; and expresses his hearty thankfulness, that he himself is called to it. Neither of which he could properly do, unless he knew what a sinful, guilty, undone, helpless creature he is by nature; and that in JESUS CHRIST there is a free and full salvation provided for him, reaching to his every need in this life and the future.

II. I observe also, that the party questioned is supposed to be instructed in, and acquainted with the nature and meaning of the baptismal vow, as corresponding to that salvation. He is supposed to know this; that he is not called upon to believe, and do the things contained in the baptismal vow, only because GOD will have him so to believe and do, but also from the very nature of his fallen state; because being by nature in a state of sin and death, as *guilty and helpless*, he must needs, if he will be saved, believe in GOD through JESUS CHRIST, seeing there is no other way but this of CHRIST wherein GOD is merciful to guilty sinners; and GOD, for his own glory, has provided this way for their pardon and acceptance to his favour; and because also being by nature under *the dominion of sin*, and estranged from GOD, in a miserable subjection to the devil, his liberty lies intirely in his renouncing the one, and turning to the other, through the grace offered him. And *that* he is here supposed to be instructed in and acquainted with. This is plain likewise from his thanking GOD that he hath called him

to

to this ſtate of ſalvation, and by his praying GOD to give him grace that he may continue in the ſame, believing and doing what his godfathers and godmothers promiſed for him; which practice of faith and obedience is indeed being in a ſtate of ſalvation in the very nature of the thing itſelf, as it is a preſent enjoyment of the ſalvation that is in CHRIST, in an actual freedom from the guilt and power of ſin.—I obſerve,

III. That in this *Queſtion* and *Anſwer* the perſon queſtioned is farther ſuppoſed to be inſtructed in, and acquainted with the nature of baptiſm, as an inſtrument, by divine appointment, ſealing all the bleſſings of this ſalvation to thoſe who thus believe and do, and to thoſe only, though baptized. He ſees the bleſſing on one part, and the obligation on the other both incloſed and ſealed up together in the baptiſmal ordinance. He is ſatisfied, that as baptiſm ſeals CHRIST and all his benefits, ſo only to true believers; and therefore, where the condition is not wrought in the heart, and manifeſt in the life, there baptiſm has not its ſealing force and power. Yet he is adviſed, that baptiſm does convey and aſſure CHRIST and all his benefits to all thoſe who do believe with that faith which worketh obedience; ſuch faith and obedience being, as it were, the preſent poſſeſſion of ſalvation: and accordingly he heartily thanks GOD for having called him by his word and Spirit to this true faith, and thereby to a ſtate of ſalvation, in which he regards and walks with GOD as his GOD in covenant, by virtue of baptiſm, and prays that he may have grace to continue in this ſtate of ſalvation, living by faith, unto his life's end.

In

In these things the person questioned is here supposed to be instructed, as he is also supposed with full purpose of heart to acquiesce in them. Concerning which acquiescence of his he here makes the fullest and most peremptory declaration, saying, "I do verily think "myself bound to believe and do those things which "my godfathers and godmothers promised for me;" 'not only because in my name, as my representatives, they promised for my so doing and believing, but because I see and know my whole salvation depends hereon; and because I cordially approve, and sincerely value this salvation, in the whole of it, as most worthy of and honourable to GOD and to JESUS CHRIST my Saviour, as well as being complete in its effects to myself. And although I see and foresee that a constant succession of self-denials, reproaches and sufferings, must be my lot in this state of Christian salvation I am called to, yet I am stedfastly determined, by the help of GOD, thus to believe and do, as my bounden duty is.—Yea, and I am so far from being discouraged at the thought of what I have already, or may hereafter be obliged to forego, lose, or suffer in this state of salvation, that I heartily thank GOD for having called me (first in my baptism, when I was an infant, wherein he graciously took me into the number of his people, and since by his word and Spirit begetting faith in me, and so making my baptism of full force) to this state of salvation wherein I stand: for such mercy of our heavenly Father toward me I am abundantly, above all things, and in every case thankful.—And there is but one thing that I have henceforward to ask especially at his hands, which is, that GOD will give me grace that, by no treachery

treachery of my own heart, device of the devil, or frowns or smiles from the world, I may be moved; but that always, every where, and in every thing, I may be kept continuing in the faith and practice of a Christian, without wavering and without drawing back, unto my life's end.'

The sense of the passage is now fully before us; and we may each of us seasonably make some inquiries into ourselves concerning it. For the matter before us is not the business of children, but that which we must be all found, not only in the profession, but also in the practice of, as we hope to meet CHRIST with any courage or comfort at his second coming to judge the quick and the dead. Permit me therefore to ask every person in this assembly, now grown up to years of discretion,

First, Whether you think yourself bound to believe and do what is contained in the baptismal vow? Do you think your believing in JESUS CHRIST, renouncing sin, the world, and the devil, and walking after GOD's will and commandments, to be the very business of your life? And that you are really and actually bound to such a conduct by your baptismal profession? It is true indeed these engagements were made for you when you knew nothing of the matter: but the question is, *now*, that you have your reason about you, do you think yourself obliged to stand by your Christian profession, and that declaration made thereof in baptism, or not? If you say, "No; what concern have I with engagements made without my consent? I do not think myself bound to these things:" Then you will take notice, that you do in fact disclaim your baptism, and,

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in consequence, renounce Christianity, and all hope of salvation through JESUS CHRIST. You put yourself quite off the Gospel foundation, and determine to stand on your own bottom for everlasting life. But then, if these be your thoughts, how very inconsistent a part have you been acting, and how have you been trifling with GOD, as often as you have come into a Christian assembly, or approached unto the Lord's table? Since both the one and the other of these are, in the very nature of them, public acknowledgments of your judging and believing there is salvation in none other but JESUS CHRIST, and of your thinking yourselves obliged to die unto sin and live unto GOD, after the example of CHRIST's death and resurrection, and according to the rule of GOD's holy word.—But if you judge yourself bound to believe and to do these things contained in the baptismal vow, I ask,

Secondly, Have you a stedfast will to do so? Can you say, from the bottom of your heart, as in the presence of Him who knows your secret thoughts, and as you hope to be saved, "I will do so by GOD's help. I have no objection to any thing here required of me to believe, renounce or perform; it is my honest desire, GOD knows, to fulfil it all; and although I have no sufficiency of myself to perform the least part of it, yet I am resolutely determined upon performing the whole in the stated course of my life, by GOD's help?" Now let us beware, my dear brother, that while we are saying this, we have at the bottom no reserves. If you do not give GOD absolutely *all*, you give him nothing. Are you therefore fully and wholly determined upon a life of faith in GOD as your present and

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eternal *all* through JESUS CHRIST, to be juſtified, accepted, and glorified, only in his own Goſpel way, through the righteouſneſs and death of JESUS CHRIST? Are you determined to renounce the dominion which the devil, the world, and the fleſh, naturally have over you? to forſake every known ſin, in a deſire that no ſin may be hid from you, and to oppoſe all the ſuggeſtions of the fleſh, temptations of the world, and devices of the devil, that would draw you into ſin? And are you determined alſo to make conformity to GOD's will and commandments the great end you will aim at in all your conduct, ſearching what that will of the Lord is, labouring to bring yourſelf to it, and never allowing yourſelf to diſpenſe with the performance of any the leaſt part of it on any conſideration? Now, what ſay you? Is it ſtill your language, "By GOD's help ſo I "will?" What, does no body among us find any drawing back in his heart? What, is there no crying from within, "It is too much; theſe are hard ſayings? Muſt it be all this? Will nothing leſs ſatisfy?" Why, Sirs, you ſee, it is all this, and not a jot leſs. And if you have not a will to it all, you are as yet no believer, no Chriſtian; neither have you any part in the Goſpel ſalvation. Your heart is unchanged, you are ſtill a natural man, whatever be the outward regular form of your life; and you have ſtill all to learn, as to the eternal welfare of your ſoul; for you ſee plainly your will is ſtill in a ſtate of enmity and oppoſition to the will of GOD.—But if you ſay, I have a will to all theſe things, I would deſire you, for preventing all miſtakes, to inquire farther,

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Whether you are determined thus to believe and do by a conſtant faithful recourſe to the help of GOD? For your diligence in ſeeking that help, without which you own you cannot do any of theſe things, will be your beſt proof that you have really given unto you a will to do them. If you ſay, I am determined to believe and do as a Chriſtian ought, and yet do not ſeek the help of GOD to give you power for the work; do not pray, do not read, do not communicate, do not meditate, where can be your good-will to your Chriſtian duty? It is not a warm and haſty reſolution, that proves you have a heart fixed and determined herein, but a ſteady deliberate choice, producing an unwearied diligence in the uſe of all the means of your obtaining that grace without which you can perform none of theſe things: yet neither is it a formal cuſtomary attendance upon and going over all theſe means, that will argue the determination of heart that is in queſtion; but an attendance upon them in a ſincere, earneſt, expreſs deſire of obtaining grace to grow in faith, to overcome ſin, and to ſerve GOD. If you have really thus a will to the work, and are perſeveringly ſeeking GOD's help for the power; if, whenever you come ſhort or fall, you ſtill continue calling upon GOD to give you more grace, and are never beat out of your ſeeking it by any diſcouragements, you are the Chriſtian; and however great your imperfections, and manifold your failures, ſtill be aſſured that CHRIST *lives in you, and you in him*; for no leſs than that is the very truth of your caſe.

What has been now ſubmitted to inquiry very properly affords ground for an addreſs to all who are here preſent. And,

Firſt,

First, To those who are young, and as yet but growing up to years of discretion. What I have to say to them on the occasion is, that until they understand what their godfathers and godmothers promised for them, really perceive themselves bound to believe and do what was so promised in their name, and find themselves moved and stirred up in their hearts to be sincerely willing hereunto, and are actually calling upon GOD to give them grace for the performance of it, they ought not to come to Confirmation; because they therein declare, that having weighed these things, and carefully examined into their own hearts, they find themselves determined to perform them by the help of GOD. It were to be wished, that this excellent institution were administered with more frequency, and attended upon with more reverence, to the end that young persons might be led to more serious impressions of the importance there is in publicly declaring themselves content with, and determined to practise their baptismal vow. But how absurd is it, that very children should be admitted to Confirmation, as if the imposition of hands were a kind of charm that should do them good, when themselves knew neither the *why* nor the *wherefore* of the transaction? And if young persons should not come to Confirmation, till they have both understanding of the baptismal vow, and also good-will to the performance of it, how much less should they be encouraged to come to the Lord's table under such disqualification, to gratify the formality of others, and to their own exceeding hurt and hindrance! But,

Secondly, What has been now brought into inquiry may be very properly addressed to those whose consciences

ſciences have teſtified againſt them, that they have not a will to believe and do what, as Chriſtians, is bound upon them. My dear friends, I cannot be ſo inſenſible to your condition, as not to beſeech you to conſider how miſerable that condition is. If ye had not been born in a Chriſtian country, if ye had not been baptized in the name of CHRIST, if ye had never heard the word of GOD, your caſe had not been ſo bad as now it is. But all theſe advantages ye have enjoyed in vain. In vain? alas! worſe than in vain; to the vaſt increaſe of your guilt. For ye cannot but think in your own minds, that *it ſhall be more tolerable for* the inhabitants of *Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for* you? Ye have heard the Maſter's will, but have not done it; your ſtripes therefore ſhall be the *more*. Take this thought home with you. "Surely there is no ſalvation but in CHRIST; I ſee not any ſhadow of hope but in him; yet in him I am not; for I believe not, nor do as he hath commanded. Should death come upon me as I now am, could I be ſafe? Would not my caſe be wretched for ever? It muſt be otherwiſe with me than it has been. But when? Hereafter? But why not now, as well? now, that the Word and Spirit call me? Ah, that I could ſay, by GOD's help I will be a Chriſtian indeed! How eaſy would my mind then be! It muſt be done. Up, my ſoul, for death ſtands at the door; and thou art undone if it find thee thus; undone without remedy for ever and ever." O what a thought is it, that there are ſo many among us who will not do what their ſureties promiſed for them!

Laſtly,

Lastly, To those who have had a comfortable answer upon the inquiry, know their Master's will, have a will to do it, and are diligently seeking grace to enable them to the performance; I would observe, that it is their duty to be "heartily thankful to their heavenly "Father, that he hath called them to this state of sal-"vation through JESUS CHRIST;" to bear upon their hearts the liveliest and most abiding sense of his goodness towards them therein; and to shew forth their gratitude by a life of patience, perseverance and praise. It is their duty also to pray always unto GOD, that he will give them grace to continue in well-doing unto their lives end, never weary, and never discouraged; adding grace unto grace; growing in the inner man, and getting more above the devil, world and flesh, that they may be more serviceable to GOD in their generation, and may wait with more longing desire for their inheritance in the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour JESUS CHRIST.

SERMON III.

ACTS xvi. 30.

What must I do to be saved?

THE motives and obligations to keep and walk in the practice of the baptismal vow having been sufficiently set forth, we are now to proceed unto the explanation of the vow itself. It consists of *three* parts;

First,

First, A renunciation of the devil, the world, and the flesh.

Secondly, A belief of all the articles of the Christian faith.

Thirdly, Keeping GOD's holy will and commandments, and walking in the same all the days of your life.

Concerning these three particulars, it will be proper now, before we enter on a special examination of them, to observe in general, what has been before touched upon, the necessity of such renunciation, faith, and obedience. And this lies purely in the condition of our fallen nature, which, like that of the fallen angels, is a state of atheism as to the practice of any faith in GOD, love towards him, reverence of him, trust in him, desire to please him; in short, as to any happiness resulting from the knowledge of his infinite and eternal excellencies, his nearness to us, and our relation and dependence upon him. The reason why by nature we are thus without GOD in the world is, because in our fallen state there is a principle in us, called Sin, or the Flesh, under the influence of which (while in that state) we think, act and live independent of GOD, seeking all our sufficiencies from the creature instead of the Creator, having all our ends and aims centring in ourselves, not in him. Now this being the state of man by nature, is plainly a state of alienation from GOD, and rebellion against him; and, as such, a state of misery: for being a state of alienation, it has evidently cut us off from all possibility of happiness, which can only be had in GOD; and being a state of rebellion, has exposed us to his almighty wrath and indignation. Left in this state our ruin is as cer-

tain as that of the fallen angels; yet to deliver ourselves out of it, we have neither will nor power. We cannot divest ourselves of our nature, and while that remains we shall always set up *self* and reject GOD for happiness; or if we could return to submission, how could we heal the breach made by our apostasy, and avert divine indignation? Now to heal this breach, to satisfy GOD's injured honour, and to bring man back to his proper place of dependency; by the former, to open a way to man's happiness in GOD; by the latter, to bring him into the enjoyment of it; this is the business of the Son of GOD in the character of Mediator. The salvation thus wanted, and thus provided, the person here speaking does solemnly declare his unfeigned acceptance of in the words of the baptismal profession, wherein, upon a previous acquaintance with the sinfulness and misery of his fallen state, and with the salvation that is in JESUS CHRIST, he thus publicly declares himself. "I abhor and detest the dominion which the devil, the world, and the flesh, have naturally over me, and under which I lived, till CHRIST came to me by his word and Spirit, shewed me my misery in that sad condition, offered me mercy, and gave me deliverance from this accursed slavery. And now that I am set at liberty, I do, as my sponsors in my baptism promised I should, most avowedly renounce, to the glory of GOD and the comfort of his church, the service of all these mine enemies; fully determined, by the grace of GOD, never more to yield myself unto them; but continually to oppose them, rejecting steadily all their solicitations, and taking every measure for lessening the influence I do or may find they

they have over me.—And, in a renunciation of these, I do, as it was promised I should farther do, avouch my cordial and thankful acceptance of the covenant of grace, sincerely believing in, and humbly relying upon that way of salvation that is in CHRIST JESUS my Saviour, wherein reverently and confidently I lay hold of GOD, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as my reconciled GOD; whom I desire henceforward to regard as my Father in the merits of JESUS CHRIST, with whom I wish to live in a blessed communion and fellowship as my most desired happiness here, and in whom I wait and look for perfect and everlasting glory hereafter.—And I am now so well convinced of the excellency of his majesty, and the obligations of duty and gratitude that lie upon me, that I do, as was likewise engaged for in my name, solemnly consent to his absolute dominion over me, desiring to partake of the valuable liberty and perfect freedom of serving him, according to his revealed mind and will, all the days of my life: and this in a constant subjection of my whole self, soul, body, and spirit, which are all his, to his pleasure: and in a conformity of every thought, word and work to his commandments."

And now what does the whole of this amount to, but that, seeing by nature we are apostate creatures, serving the devil, the world, and the flesh, and, in that estate, rushing on to eternal ruin, we must needs accept that deliverance from these enemies which CHRIST offers us? And seeing also there is no reconciliation with GOD for us but in JESUS CHRIST, and that otherwise we remain the objects of his wrath, we must close with it, and make it ours in a cordial acceptance

of it? And seeing yet farther, that by nature we are alienated from GOD, being set up for ourselves to be our own masters, we must return to our place, submit to GOD's government, and yield ourselves his servants to obey him? So that the necessity of this vow in the several parts of it lies in the very nature of our fallen state, from which we cannot have deliverance but in the true keeping of this vow; which keeping of the baptismal vow is, you see, no other than a fallen creature's acceptance of the salvation that is in JESUS CHRIST. For only suppose a man truly acquainted with the sad circumstances of his natural state, as a state of sin under the devil, the world, and the flesh, a state of wrath, and a state of alienation from GOD, and what will he desire? When he sees what a state of sin and spiritual death he lies in, and what wretched monsters have the guidance of him, will he not wish to be set free from them, and to be taken out of his horrid condition? When he sees death at his door, and hell opening its mouth to swallow him up in its everlasting and most intolerable flames, will he not wish to be saved from so great a damnation? to have GOD reconciled to him, and to exchange everlasting misery for endless glory? And finally, when he sees himself without the image of GOD in his soul, his affections alienated from him, and that he has no love towards him, nor desire after him, nor delight in him, nor any thing, in short, of the obediential spirit of a dependent creature remaining within him; will he not wish to be restored to original purity, seeing without this he knows he cannot be capable of any happiness in GOD, and that in heaven itself he should miss of a reward? You

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see the whole matter is, a fallen creature, made sensible of his fallen state, desires help; and when he finds that help offered him in CHRIST, he accepts it: that is to say, seeing CHRIST offers him deliverance from sin, the world, and the devil, he accepts it; seeing CHRIST offers him deliverance from wrath and hell, he accepts it; seeing CHRIST offers to restore unto him the image of GOD upon his soul, he accepts it; the vow itself being but the public declaration and avowal of such his acceptance.

Such is the nature and the necessity of the baptismal vow. And taken in the light wherein the matter now lies before us, *three* very plain and inconteſtible consequences present themselves to us, highly worth our notice.

I. That such as deny or are ignorant of the state they are in by nature, cannot have accepted the offer of salvation, nor possibly be keeping the baptismal vow.

II. That such as are not keeping the baptismal vow are still in their natural state.

III. That they who are keeping it are actually in a state of present salvation.

All which have been glanced at before, but now require a more distinct consideration.

First, Such as deny, or are ignorant of the state they are in by nature, cannot have accepted the offer of salvation, nor possibly be keeping the baptismal vow, so they must needs be still in their natural state of sin and death. The Christian salvation (and of course the acceptance thereof, together with the baptismal vow,

which is but the declaration of that acceptance) ſtands altogether upon the ſuppoſition of our fallen ſtate, and the ſeveral parts of that ſalvation upon the ſeveral circumſtances of our condition by nature; ſo that my acceptance of this ſalvation can only follow upon my acquaintance with my fallen eſtate, which conſequently if I am unacquainted with, I cannot poſſibly accept that ſalvation. Conſider therefore; have you been made deeply and thoroughly acquainted with your fallen and loſt condition by nature? Have you been brought to ſee yourſelf an apoſtate creature, in whom dwelleth only a principle and body of ſin, which is perpetually ſuggeſting to you its evil, that is, its ſenſual, earthly and deviliſh motions; a principle, that naturally engages to itſelf all your thoughts, deſires, and purſuits; a principle, that cannot delight in GOD, and would not you ſhould have any thought of him, or converſe with him; a principle, that naturally wraps you up in yourſelf, ſhutting out of your conduct every conſideration due to GOD and man; a principle, that naturally makes you mind nothing but *ſelf*, and mean nothing but *ſelf*, your own praiſe, your own intereſt, your own gratification; a carnal principle, craving indulgence, eaſe, pleaſure; a worldly principle, all for the preſent life, its honours and intereſts; a deviliſh principle, ſtirring up in your heart high thoughts of yourſelf, low ones of others; envy, malice, reſentment, revenge, cruelty? I ſay, has paſt and preſent experience taught you that you are thus born in ſin? And have you been made to ſee this ſtate of ſin as a ſtate of miſery, as that whereon is entailed the wrath and curſe of GOD; as that which has made you liable to preſent death,

death, and future eternal misery; and as a state too, whereby your soul is robbed of its richest jewel, the image of GOD, which before the fall was the grand prerogative, the distinguished glory, the noble qualification of man for serving and enjoying his Creator? Have you found yourself this corrupted, fallen, undone creature? If not, you cannot have accepted the offer of CHRIST, who cannot be a physician to the *whole*. If you *deny* that you are thus fallen, you disclaim all that can properly be called salvation, determinately strike your name out of the list of those whom CHRIST shall save, and put your eternal happiness upon a footing, which, after all your fine reasonings, gives you little support, and which you feel in your own breast will not bear you out against the sense of guilt, and the fear of death and judgment. And if you are *ignorant* of this your fallen state through mere carelessness and inconsideration, though I dare not say your case is alike desperate with that of gainsayers, yet I must say your state is at present equally bad: you are not, you cannot be in CHRIST; for you have never found the want of him, and therefore could never receive him to be your Saviour. And I beseech you, Sirs, consider what a wrong you must have been doing to your own souls. What, not so much as to inquire whether you were a fallen creature or not? In so many years to make no search, whether you wanted not salvation? And so to suffer the Lord of glory to stand waiting upon you with the offer of salvation, without paying him the least regard? How can you answer this to yourself? Sure I am, if you have not lost your reason, you cannot acquit yourself to your own conscience.

And the reflection cannot sit easy upon you, that, if there be salvation in CHRIST, however much you need it, you have no part therein, through your own shameful negligence of looking into yourself, and searching after the deplorable circumstances of our fallen state.—But some of you are saying, "I know I am a corrupted creature; I confess myself by nature a child of wrath; I own the loss of the image of GOD which I suffered in *Adam*." To you therefore I propose for inquiry,

Secondly, Whether you are keeping the baptismal vow. For if you are not, your case is not a jot mended, however exactly you may know both your lost estate by nature, and that there is free and full salvation in JESUS CHRIST. The point is, whether or no you have closed with, and accepted that salvation; which acceptance has been fully shewn to be no other thing than being in the practice of the baptismal vow. If you are living in sin, or not seeking to apply unto yourself the merits of CHRIST for your pardon and acceptance with GOD, or not endeavouring in your whole conduct to serve and please GOD, it is plain you have not accepted the offered salvation, and are still in your natural state. Now therefore look to yourself. If you are the person I am now intending, one that has knowledge, and knowledge only concerning man's misery and CHRIST's salvation, your case is this. You know that you are a fallen creature, sensual, earthly and devilish by nature, and you know that there is deliverance from the dominion of sin in CHRIST, yet sin hath full dominion over you. Either you are wholly led away in your heart and conduct by the love of pleasure, of indulgence, of sloth, and worldly ease; or you

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are under the power of covetousness, your mind carking and caring for the things of the world, never satisfied, and ever intent upon the main point of being *something* in life through your wealth; or you are under the direction of worldly esteem, not daring to be better than is consistent with keeping your reputation among your neighbours; or you are of unhumbled spirit; wayward, you must have your own way, and are angry whether God or man thwart you; proud, you are lifted up by whatever seems to distinguish you from others. These and the like are your ruling tempers. Now if all or any of this be your case, you cannot say that in practice you are renouncing the devil, the world and the flesh, or have partaken of CHRIST's salvation from the dominion of sin. So in this respect it is plain you are still in your natural state. Then again, you have a knowledge in your head that you are a guilty creature; and that there is perfect reconciliation in CHRIST; but you have made no use of, you have received no benefit from this knowledge; you are not humbled and alarmed at the sight of your condition; you have no sense of the value of the reconciliation; you have not drawn nigh to the throne of grace by the blood of the atonement; your heart is not sprinkled from an evil conscience by it; you are not *filled*, you are not so much as acquainted with what is meant by *peace in believing*; all that you know of this important matter is but as the knowledge of a foreign tale in which you have no concern. See then if the guilt of all your sins does not yet lie upon you. Finally, you know that to be brought to the love and practice of GOD's commandments is a principal part of CHRIST's salvation,

and of your want by nature. But with any love of GOD's law in your heart you are perfectly unacquainted, neither can you say, that to walk therein is your main, your grand, your ruling, nay, that it is in any measure your real, deliberate concern. What, are you striving every day to walk with GOD, watchful over your conduct that nothing you do may displease or dishonour him, studying above all things how you may please him, and how you may every day abound therein more and more; and calling ardently and constantly for his grace to enable you to do so? Alas! you know this is not the employment of your ordinary thoughts and desires; other things, as I have said, of various kinds, perpetually take you up: GOD has not the sway and rule within. Of pleasing him you think but little. You do not ask, whether what you do be agreeable to his mind or not. You live in needless temptations. Your ordinary course is forgetfulness of GOD, and to do what he bids you is far from being the settled design of your life. I beseech you therefore, are you, or can you desire to be thought GOD's servant? Your conscience testifies you are not, and therefore acknowledges that CHRIST has not circumcised your heart to love and serve the Lord your GOD. Brethren, let us not be deceived: Let not our knowledge deceive us. You see whatever knowledge a man has of himself, and of JESUS CHRIST, yet if he be not in the practice of the baptismal vow, he has not accepted CHRIST's offer, therefore is no true Christian; and consequently is in his natural state of sin and wrath. A state which, however terrible it be to all that are in it, is peculiarly so to such as know their Master's will and do it not. But,

Thirdly,

Thirdly, You are really, though imperfectly, walking in the baptismal vow. Sin has not dominion over you; you have come as an undone sinner to CHRIST, and taken him for your Saviour, and are determined also not to part with him, though you suffer the loss of all things; to please GOD and serve him is your main desire and aim: You are therefore in a present state of salvation; for you have heard it made apparent, that to be in the practice of the baptismal vow, and to receive CHRIST in his whole salvation, are exactly the same thing. And you are in the practice of this your vow; for you are not fighting daily against sin, opposing the body of sin in you, and never lying down under its dominion, though it sometimes gain advantage of you? Are not your eyes upon JESUS for pardon and acceptance with your injured GOD? Have you not taken, and do you not continually take refuge in his blood from the accusations of conscience and dread of the law? And your business, is it not through a supply of the Spirit of the same JESUS, to live a godly life, desiring to be conformed to GOD's revealed mind, and making that, and not your own inclinations, nor the humours of others, the measure of your conduct? This you cannot deny, and this you ought to own to the glory of that grace by which you thus stand, and walk in the midst of so many enemies and temptations, and cumbered as you are with flesh and blood. I say, you ought to own it to the glory of GOD, and to your own comfort and encouragement. And if you are thus walking, I see not the least cause you have to suspect your being passed from death unto life, although I know also the devil will be persuading you to the contrary.

Give him no heed; tell him you know his character, that he is *the accuser of the brethren*; and you know his doom too, that he shall as such *be cast down*, Rev. ii. 10. Insist upon it against him, that by nature sin had the whole power of you, but now, though it lives, it doth not *reign*; that you are sure this could not be through any power of your own, any more than a dead body can raise itself out of the grave. Insist, that once you were dead, but now you are alive, for you find spiritual life in you, you feel the motions, the desires, the longings, the resolves of one whose soul lives, and you are sure it is not your natural self which doth this, but CHRIST who liveth in you. And if you are charged with indwelling sin and imperfection, acknowledge it, but avouch the righteousness of CHRIST, and insist notwithstanding, that you are accepted in the well-beloved. You, brethren, are the very children of GOD in CHRIST JESUS. GOD hath called, justified and sanctified you, and you are in the way to glory. You ought to be sensible of the inestimable gift you have received, to value the noble honour you are admitted to, to boast of the high privileges you enjoy in CHRIST JESUS. Ah, Sirs, a very little time will shew the world how blessed you are. The day of the Lord will shew it. When JESUS comes with power and glory in the clouds, the whole world shall own, that *ye are the blessed of the Lord who made heaven and earth.* Then sinners of every degree, then malignant devils shall own it to their confusion, *when Christ shall be glorified in his saints, and honoured in all them that believe.* Be of good comfort therefore, *be strong, quit you like men*; hold fast the beginning of your confidence stedfast unto the end,

end, for GOD will bruise Satan under your feet shortly. O be sensible how great things the Lord hath done for your souls!

SERMON IV.

ACTS xvi. 30.

What must I do to be saved?

OUR last Discourse on the Church Catechism related to the necessity of the baptismal vow in all the parts of it, which necessity was seen to lie in our fallen and lost estate by nature, from which the actual renunciation, faith, and obedience spoken of in the vow is a present, true, and real deliverance.

The way therefore is now opened to a particular examination of the three distinct parts of it. The first of them is the renunciation of "the devil and all his "works, the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, "and all the sinful lusts of the flesh." Which renunciation you see also hath its three parts; each of which must be separately considered. And it will be proper to introduce this particular explanation by observing (for the better understanding the whole of it, and that the renunciation itself may be seen at once in a comprehensive view) that by and since the fall there is a principle of sin in the nature of man, which I cannot better describe than by calling it a principle of carnal independency, by which man (as the devils did before him)

him) withdraws himself from dependence on GOD, and sets up for his own master, and to be happy as well as he can without GOD. Now man thus set up for himself, and determined by his fallen nature to have nothing to do with GOD, and to seek his happiness not in GOD, finds himself in a world which he looks upon as his own, and to which he intirely gives himself up, seeking in the things of it to gratify his proud independent spirit, and to please his carnal inclinations. Into this state of carnal independency he was originally led through the malicious artifice of the devil, who, having seduced him into this apostasy, and thus fixed him on the world, has made him his own subject, and, by means of this carnal independency in his nature continually wrought upon by the things of the world, does keep him actually and truly under his own proper direction and guidance all the while he continues in this natural state: So that you see, man in his natural state is a creature who, according to his power, has made himself independent of GOD in pride, and is under the power of carnal inclination; who is fixed upon the world for the gratification of the independent carnal principle that is in his nature; and is secretly led by the devil, who, by working upon this principle of sin in a continual and engaging representation of the things of the world, does intirely, yet with the man's own freest choice, direct and lead him as he pleases.

Here we may find then to what the renunciation before us has regard, that it is a professed renunciation of this natural state, and consequently imports a declaration to this purpose; "I do solemnly and resolvedly renounce the service of my sinful nature, neither

will I henceforward in the pride of my heart live as independent of GOD, nor yield myself a servant to my carnal inclinations. And therefore I do avow myself determined to forego that worldly course of conduct which is the gratification of my natural pride and carnal inclination. As also herewith and hereby I reject Satan's dominion, being stedfastly purposed, by no art of his, to be prevailed upon to return to his service, by yielding myself to live after the natural desires of my heart, which I will constantly oppose notwithstanding all his allurements or terrors, being firmly determined, in my own person, as well by my example as by my influence, to do what in my power is to combat with and destroy the practice of sin, and therewith the dominion and tyranny which by means of sin the devil has established, and is still maintaining in the world."

After this general view of the baptismal renunciation, I am now at full liberty to proceed to the several parts of it. The *first* of which is a renunciation of *the devil and all his works*. Here we will first explain the words themselves, and then come to certain practical considerations arising from them.

And *first*, for the explanation. And here we must shew, what is meant by *the Devil*, what by *his Works*. And, under each, what it is to *renounce* him and them.

The Devil. Every one knows that by the *Devil* is meant the fallen angels, the leader of whom is here only mentioned, though all of them be intended. But seeing the point is, we are here *renouncing the Devil*, it is plain that he is considered not simply as he is in himself, but as he stands related to us. For to renounce signifies to refuse, forsake, and cast off; and this

this we could not be called upon to do in the present case, unless the devil had concerns with us. Wherefore by the devil in this place is to be understood, the devil as he stands related to us in our natural state. And what his relation to us in that state is, is very plain from the titles given him in scripture; where he is called *the Prince of this World*, *the God of this World*, and the like: Expressions which evidently set him out as having dominion over the world, that is, over the men of the world, all of us by nature, who, while we are in our natural state, are of this world, and as such *of the devil*, his actual, real subjects. By the devil, we mean the devil as having usurped a dominion over us, the devil as our king, prince, and ruler.

Consequently, when we say we *renounce the devil*, we mean, that we renounce the devil as having dominion over us, that we cast off his service, that we no more allow him to have any guidance and direction of us. An angel may say, "I have no dealings with the devil;" but a sinner must say more. "Once I did, but now I will serve him no longer, I will submit to no more of his orders, I declare myself none of his subjects, I will pay no regard to his intimations, I will not yield myself again to him upon any of his fair but false enticements, I will not be seduced by his lies, nor frightned by his terrors into his service; him as my prince and master I absolutely and for ever disavow, and to him and his interests I am a professed determined enemy." It follows,

And all his Works. I not only renounce him, but also *all his Works*. Though it be true, that all sin in general is originally the work of the devil, as far as his tempting

tempting thereto may make it *his*; and though it be true alſo, that there are certain ſins, ſuch as pride, malice, envy and the like, which in a peculiar propriety may be called *his*, becauſe firſt and moſt malignantly in him: yet inaſmuch as ſin in general, and theſe devil-like ſins in particular, are more properly ours, when conſidered as dwelling in us, than his who does but tempt us to them; and inaſmuch alſo as all ſin in general and particular is actually included under *the luſts of the fleſh*, and there renounced; I conceive that by *the works of the devil* here muſt be underſtood ſomething different, and therefore, that it means ſin, in general and particular, in a peculiar reference to the devil's kingdom, and all ſuch things as the devil ſupports his dominion by; for theſe are *his* own proper works, and are wrought for *his* own proper end.

Accordingly when I ſay, *I renounce all the works of the devil*; I declare, *Firſt*, That becauſe it is by ſin that the devil maintains his dominion in the world, I will practiſe no ſin: neither in me nor by my means ſhall he hold dominion through my ſin. I declare, *Secondly*, That, ſince it is by the general countenance given to ſin in the world that he upholds his tyranny, he ſhall not have the countenance of my example and influence to ſupport his cauſe. And I declare, *Thirdly*, That I myſelf will not give into it, and will diſcourage in others thoſe various lying artifices of his by which he keeps up his helliſh uſurpation upon earth; ſuch as all kind of ſuperſtitious uſages, which have no foundation in the word of God, and do ſerve to keep men from him by the deceit of the devil, and his holding them under unreaſonable fears, as idolatry among the heathen,

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falſe worſhip among the papiſts, and among us faith in charms, ominous days, fortune-tellers, conjurers and the like. *Fourthly*, Since by raiſing perſecution againſt the church of GOD the devil attempts at laſt to ſupport his kingdom, therefore I will not have a hand in any ſuch work. Seeing by theſe and the like things the devil works to ſupport his kingdom, which, by ſeducing *Adam* unto ſin he erected in the world, I declare, that I will not meddle with any of them, and that I diſclaim all his works of darkneſs, being abſolutely reſolved that as I will no longer ſerve him myſelf, ſo I will not allow myſelf in the practice of any one thing, great or ſmall, by which he does in his ſubjects and followers labour to keep himſelf in the poſſeſſion of his uſurped government over the wicked world.

And thus much of the explanation. Let us come now to the improvement; which ſhall conſiſt of an examination, and a ſuitable exhortation as our caſe ſhall be.

The examination is: *Have we renounced the devil, and all his works?* This inquiry will ſerve to make what has been ſet forth more plain and practical. *Have we renounced the devil, and all his works?* that is, the devil as a prince, who by nature holds an abſolute dominion over us. Have we ſeen the devil holding a dominion over the world? Have we ſeen that the moſt of mankind are in ſubjection to it? Have we ſeen him leading all thoſe without exception who are not delivered by CHRIST captive at his will? Have we ſeen that ourſelves are his natural-born ſubjects? Have we ſeen his dominion over ourſelves and others with abhorrence and deteſtation? Have we gone over from him

him ourſelves unto CHRIST, and declared againſt him, to win others from him unto the Lord? Brethren, have we thus ſeen, hated, and forſaken the kingdom of the devil? Take notice, this cannot be the caſe, if we be not renouncing *the works of the devil*, thoſe works whereby the devil holds his dominion upon earth. Wherefore are none of you committing ſin? What, my dear brethren, none of you committing drunkenneſs, or ſwearing, or ſabbath-breaking, or fornication? What not one who is guilty of any of theſe things? No; nor one covetous perſon, one proud, one revengeful perſon here; nor one liar, nor one lover of pleaſures, nor one living after the courſe of this world? What, is not ſin practiſed by any of us? Can we all ſay, I am clean, every one for himſelf in the preſence of GOD? Well, whoſoever cannot, whoſeſoever conſcience pronounces him guilty, may know, and muſt be told, that he is of the devil. It is not I that ſay this upon my own authority. It is GOD that ſays, "Whoſoever committeth ſin is of the devil," belongs to him, and is his ſervant. You do not, I am ſenſible, like to think yourſelf to be, or to be told that you are the devil's child. Why then you muſt by grace forſake ſin, for till you do that, while you commit ſin, you are of the devil; every drunkard is of the devil, every whoremonger of the devil, every ſwearer, every liar of the devil, every covetous, vain, carnal, proud, revengeful perſon, is of the devil. Nay, Sirs, but we are all ſtill either of the devil or not; and this one word ſhall prove us, "he that committeth ſin is of the devil, for whoſoever is born of GOD, doth not commit ſin." And is it true then, that every ſoul living in ſin is the devil's

devil's child and property? O that ever that monſter ſhould have ſo many children where CHRIST is named, and among thoſe who are baptized into his name! Nay, you ſay, but I truſt I am not committing ſin. Well; but are you not careleſsly encouraging it in the world? I do not aſk whether you deſignedly encourage it. To do this is to be a very devil incarnate. And yet (it muſt be ſpoken out) we have heard of ſuch things particularly, ſuch as encouraging, forcing, and deceiving others into the great ſin of drunkenneſs; but I aſk, are you not careleſsly encouraging ſin in the world? But how ſhall this be determined? Why, if you care not though Satan have the upper hand of CHRIST in the world, if you do not ſo much as conſider whether your conduct be for the encouragement of CHRIST's kingdom or the devil's, if you will not forego the vereſt trifle for the cauſe of CHRIST, and becauſe you ſee it does, or fear it may, encourage ſin in the world? I beſeech you, is not this careleſsly, at leaſt, being an encourager of it, and can you then be CHRIST's friend? Can you be doing CHRIST's work? Are you not plainly doing the devil's? And if you are ſerving the devil's intereſt, judge yourſelf whoſe ſervant you are. Permit me to aſk farther; while you are thus careleſs about the cauſe of CHRIST, are you not alſo an enemy to it? You know that perſecution is the devil's work for the maintenance of his kingdom, and if you ſet yourſelf againſt thoſe who profeſs to ſerve CHRIST for no other reaſon than becauſe they profeſs to do ſo, do not you evidently lend your hand to the devil, and in fact, however ignorantly, avow yourſelf to be his friend, while you thus declare yourſelf to be

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the enemy of CHRIST? Suffer me to deal freely where your ſouls are at ſtake. From what motive can any one ſet himſelf by fooliſh jeſts, banter, ridicule, or whatever influence, to diſcourage thoſe who deſire to live after the commands of CHRIST, and if they are not to be ſneered nor frightned from their purpoſe, to look upon them with diſguſt and an evil eye, or to be ready to do them a bad turn? I beſeech you, what manner of ſpirit is this? Does it come from above or below? Is it the mind of CHRIST or of his adverſary?

And now, what ſays conſcience upon this enquiry? Are we, or are we not, renouncing the devil and all his works? If we are not declared enemies of the kingdom of ſin, if we live in the practice of it, if our examples encourage it, if we are enemies to and oppoſers of ſerious ſcripture-godlineſs, (if, as I might have added above, but I choſe not to detain you) if while we are living after the courſe of the world we are propping ourſelves by vain ſuperſtitions, and putting our faith in the devil inſtead of CHRIST; then it is manifeſt whoſe ſubjects we are, and that we have not yet renounced the devil and his works. But if to ſee the extent and cruelty of Satan's dominion, be our grief and abhorrence; if we determinately forſake the practice of ſin ourſelves, and will not wittingly by our example give it the leaſt countenance in others; if in deed as well as word we ſtand up for the cauſe and the people of CHRIST, and diſcountenance every thing, great or little, that makes for the kingdom of the devil, then it is not leſs manifeſt on the other part that we have indeed renounced the devil and all his works.

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And shall I now need say any thing more to such as have been found in their own consciences the servants of Satan? To think of being in subjection to that monster, who is the avowed open enemy of the GOD that made him, the very height and summit of all malignity and sin, whose heart knows nothing but cruelty, revenge, fury, and most malicious pleasure in our ruin; to think of serving his interests too, of being employed night and day in promoting his hellish designs in the world, of being given up in all the actions of life to enlarge and establish his kingdom; to think of being made use of as his tools, presumptuously to oppose, and, as it were, to brave GOD to his face; to publish abroad the devil's triumph; to hinder, hurt, and wound the cause of that gracious JESUS who so kindly came and died to save us, and to be set up against all those that own and follow him! To think of this! What need of arguments? What can be said more? If there were no hell wherewith the devil will reward such faithful services, what need be said more? O Sirs, if you would but think whom you serve, and what dishonourable services you are employed in, you could not be easy, you would by grace change masters, and flee unto JESUS to deliver you from the power of the devil. The Lord GOD Almighty, in whose hands ten thousand devils are but as the dust of a balance, enable you to do so!

And you the children of GOD, the followers of the Lamb, who hath delivered you from the snares of the devil; will you, can you stand by and see these your poor brethren led captive by Satan, employed in his work, and going down to his dark dreadful habitation?

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Can you see this and not mourn over them, and pray for them? Ah mourn and pray for these immortal souls! Where, where is your pity? Where is your zeal, if you do not mourn, and pray, and labour for them? Methinks we should pray down heaven upon their heads, to consider what a condition they are in, how fast Satan holds them in his chain! You know how often, how earnestly I have pleaded with them. And do not you still fear, as I do, that they will not now be prevailed upon? O if you have any love for CHRIST or them; if you would wish to see them with you in the bosom of Abraham, in the arms of JESUS, pity them and pray for them. Ah, you know their time is short. How suddenly will they be where I tremble to think of their dwelling for ever, unless something be now done for them! Now, now, pity and pray for them. Sirs, you will not, you cannot surely stand still in such a cause. O, that I had the tongue of a *Paul* to provoke you! O, that I had but a little of his zeal for JESUS! Why, Sirs, it is the cause of JESUS. It is the cause of JESUS against Satan. Why are we not more ready to spend and be spent for JESUS? To you, and, alas! to me among the rest, he has intrusted his cause, his interest, his honour in this place. It is by you the kingdom of Satan must be confronted and confounded in this place. What then are we doing? Shall we still continue so little to bestir ourselves? Up, my friends, Satan is a vanquished enemy. JESUS thrust him headlong from heaven. O watch, pray, live, die for the confusion of the kingdom of the devil, and for the advancement of the kingdom of the Lord JESUS.

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SERMON V.

ACTS xvi. 30.

What muſt I do to be ſaved?

THE intimate connection there is between the three things we are called upon as Chriſtians to renounce ſhould be carefully attended to, that we may preſerve upon our minds the cleareſt conviction of the neceſſity lying upon us to renounce them all. The devil reigns by means of our corrupt affections; and the power and prevalence of theſe is maintained by being fixed upon the world and engaging us in the purſuit of the things of it. As long as the world is allowed to have the aſcendency, the corrupt principle does in that very aſcendency hold the direction of us, and we remain the ſubjects of Satan. Wherefore the actual renunciation of one of theſe is in fact the renouncing them all. When the devil is dethroned, the fleſh does not rule, and the world has loſt its influence. When the affections are withdrawn from the world, the fleſh is in a ſtate of ſubjection, and the devil caſt out. When the fleſh is mortified, the world is rejected, and the devil has loſt his power. You ſee, turn it which way you will, it is but ſaying over again the very ſame thing; and therefore that the renunciation of any one of theſe three things is impoſſible, while either of the other are ſubmitted to. If you have not renounced the dominion of the devil, you are actually ſerving

ſerving the world and the fleſh; if you are a friend of the world, the devil and the fleſh are your maſters; and to yield to the fleſh is inevitably connected with living after the courſe of the world, and ſerving the devil.

I am now to ſpeak of *renouncing the pomps and vanities of this wicked world.* Concerning which my method ſhall be as before, *firſt* to explain the matter, and *ſecondly* to improve it.

This wicked world.—The world in itſelf is not wicked, being GOD's creature, and therefore is, *as every creature of God is* declared to be, *good*, 1 Tim. iv. 4. But when the world is conſidered as it is abuſed in the uſe of it through the corruption and degeneracy of our hearts, and as being full of thoſe who give up their hearts to it inſtead of GOD, it may well be called a *wicked* world. There are two reaſons therefore why you are taught to call the world wicked; one, becauſe our perverted hearts are ſet thereupon in a wicked abuſe and forgetfulneſs of GOD, to ſeek our happineſs therein, and to place our truſt upon it: the other, becauſe the number of thoſe who follow this perverted propenſity of their hearts, and in divers ways ſeek their all in the world, is ſo great, that they in a manner overſpread the whole face of the earth: in reference to which St. *John* ſaith, *We know that the whole world lieth in wickedneſs.* By this wicked world then is to be underſtood the world when it is made the ſupreme ruling object of our deſires, in a conformity with the maxims, cuſtoms, and authority of the generality of mankind who live upon the ſame worldly plan.

By *the pomps and vanities of this wicked world*, we are to apprehend in general those various things that are in the world, which draw and engage unto a worldly course the most of mankind, indeed all but those few who are taken out of the world by the transforming power of faith in JESUS CHRIST. And therefore more particularly those things by which the world captivates and enslaves all men by nature, and the most of men continuedly in fact; such as honour, riches, pleasure, and the like, that is, (to say all in two words) the indulgence and the pride of life.

To *renounce the pomps and vanities of this wicked world*, must therefore accordingly mean these three things. *First*, In a steady, constant, and resolute opposition to the desires of our corrupted nature, to withdraw the affections from this present state of things, so as no longer either to seek happiness, or to place confidence therein, but to be determined to seek our all in GOD. And how reasonable is it that it should be thus! how dishonourable to GOD that we should ascribe all-sufficiency to the creature and deny it to the Creator, by seeking our all in it and not in him! *Secondly*, To give up in desire and pursuit every particular thing that is in the world, when considered as standing in competition with GOD for the love and trust of our hearts, or the direction of our conduct; whether it be worldly ease or pleasure on the one side, or worldly esteem or interest on the other. And consequently, *Thirdly*, To be disposed, and to live and act in a direct contrariety to the children of this world, who make up the bulk of mankind, departing absolutely from their aims and pursuits, totally disavowing the authority of worldly custom, resolutely

resolutely foregoing worldly example as any rule of conduct, disclaiming all those maxims which the world has given its countenance and sanction to, as being vile and abominable; and *finally*, at no rate either loving inordinately, or seeking eagerly, or using selfishly, ostentatiously, and indulgently, the world and the things of it as they do.

The whole of the matter put together amounts to this. The true believer in JESUS CHRIST makes his profession in regard to the world, and says, "I have chosen GOD to be my portion, to whom I desire and am determined to give up all the affections of my heart, making him my only hope and all my happiness. It is not without shame and sorrow that I reflect how, in conformity with the inclination of my corrupt nature, I have sadly and sinfully suffered myself to be carried out in the desires of my soul after this present evil world, seeking my happiness in it, and fixing my trust upon it, saying thereunto in the disposition of my heart, Thou art my God. But I have purposed, and by the grace of GOD am determined that henceforward the Lord, the invisible and eternal GOD, shall be my GOD. I disclaim and disavow the world to be any more the object of my love and desire, my hope and delight, my trust and confidence: I cannot serve these two masters; I renounce the world, I regard it with hatred and detestation as standing in competition for my heart with GOD; now I have said unto the Lord, and now I publicly declare it, Thou art my GOD. And farther, as I do thus in general renounce the world, so do I also more particularly every thing that is in it, the indulgence, the interest, the reputation it offers me, in such

ſort, that neither of them ſhall be near my heart as GOD is, and all of them ſhall be cheerfully yielded up when GOD's honour or any claim of duty to him calls for them. And *finally*, ſince through the corruption of our nature I ſee the world and the things of it univerſally abuſed, that the children of men every where have their affections ſet upon it, and that they are eagerly bent upon the purſuit of theſe preſent things alone, therefore I think myſelf bound not to enter into any of their ways, not in the leaſt meaſure to be biaſſed by the mere influence of cuſtom and example in matters of religion, nor to ſubſcribe to the authority of the world in any thing relative to my conduct; but to be always on my guard againſt the example and maxims of it, ſtrenuouſly to oppoſe them in all my behaviour, and by no means to uſe the world as they do who are of the world, whether by priding myſelf upon whatever diſtinguiſhes me in it, or by enjoying the things of it with ſinful gratification and indulgence."

From the explanation I paſs on to the improvement.

And here it is very reaſonable that we inquire, whether we have renounced the pomps and vanities of this wicked world.—Concerning which the leading queſtion is this, "Have we renounced the world itſelf?" But before this is reſolved, obſerve, if to renounce be to reject, forego, and forſake, and we are all bound to renounce, then naturally we are all of the world, for we cannot forſake that we were never related to and connected with. And in truth the ſtate of man by nature is practical atheiſm. Reflect a moment on the earlieſt period of your memory and reaſon, and you will obſerve, that your whole heart, in the deſires, hopes,

hopes, and fears of it, was fixed on the things you found about you. Whether your desires and pursuits at that time were of importance or not in themselves is not material to the present question; but whatever they were you found them fixed on the world, and not on GOD. Him you delighted not in. GOD was out of sight. As to any love of him, or trust upon him, he was to you as if there were no such Being. The world was your all. And thus it continued to be, if it be not so to this hour; you lived without GOD in the world, till by the light of the Gospel the misery of your natural state was laid open to you, and you were brought to GOD in love through faith in JESUS CHRIST. The point then to be decided is, whether you have been to this day set at liberty, and in the sincerity of your heart do acknowledge GOD for your all instead of the world? Now therefore, my brethren, deal fairly and plainly with yourselves, and resolve the important question, To which of the two do you give your hearts? Is it to the world? or is it to GOD? To both at once they cannot be given, because they are direct opposites; and yet both put in claim for your hearts: the world by natural usurped possession, GOD by right. Is then the world cast out? Has GOD your heart? Are you at a loss how to determine this? I will tell you. You may determine it this way. If you find the desires, the hopes, the fears, the love, the delight of your heart to be habitually on GOD, you may answer in the affirmative. But if, although you have some thought of GOD on occasions, some uneasy fears of him, some wishes and hasty purposes of serving him, and although you have never so clear a knowledge

in your head that GOD is better for you, and has a better title to your heart than the world, nevertheleſs you find for one ſeeming or real deſire after GOD within you, there are a thouſand after the world, and that your fears, cares, hopes, and proſpects, do habitually run out on that ſide; then it is a plain caſe that you have not the love of GOD in you, and that you have not as yet renounced the world.—This is the leading queſtion. But it is rather general. Let us come to particulars, which may better ſhew whether we have renounced the world or not: For it is evident we cannot have renounced the world, if we be under the power of any of the things of it. Wherefore how does the point ſtand in reſpect of your *intereſt* in the world? Is not this nearer your heart than GOD? Certainly it muſt, if while you are very earneſt about promoting it, very fearful of whatever would ſeem to threaten you with diſappointment in it, very active to improve every opportunity of advancing it, you experience no ſuch earneſtneſs, fear, and activity in ſeeking GOD, lying on that ſide in cold indifference, and either not conſidering what the will of GOD is when your advantage is in queſtion, or making a ſacrifice of that *will* by going unwarrantable lengths to pleaſe thoſe by whom you are profited in your worldly intereſt. Sirs, it is a common ſaying with many of you, "We muſt do ſuch things. If we do not do them we cannot get our bread." But this is a worldly maxim; whoever follows it is of the world. He carries his own condemnation in his mouth: "We muſt do ſuch things." What is this but as much as ſaying, you allow them to be ſinful; and yet you do them, becauſe otherwiſe

you

you cannot live? But this is not true. You may always live without thus sinning, but not perhaps always in that way or by those means which you have set your hearts upon; and which while you will not forego, what are you but professing thereby in plain terms your renunciation of GOD, and determination to cleave unto the world? And what may you reasonably think GOD will say at last? In truth, what less than this, "thou hast rejected me, thou hast had thy portion, go therefore, since thou wouldst have it so, inherit the fruit of thy choice in an eternal separation from my favour and presence." Again, How doth the matter stand with you upon the article of *pleasures?* Are you not a lover of pleasures more than a lover of GOD? What, not when your mind is perpetually running upon these, and while you hardly think of GOD once in a month? when you are as one bereaved, if no pleasure be in prospect, and even at such a season when time lies heavy on your hands you cannot be comforted in the thought of God? When every moment is too long in prayer or the church, and whole hours, and every day too short when you are in your amusements? Surely in such case you cannot persuade yourself to believe you have renounced the pleasures of the world. Once more, How can you answer respecting the *esteem* of men? Can you say you love the praise of GOD rather? What, when you dare not do what your conscience bids you, lest you should be laughed at, lest you should forfeit the favour of your friends, lest you should be reckoned stiff and particular? If you will only go so far in religion as is consistent with your worldly reputation, and will not, dare not move one step farther, taking all the pains

you can to satisfy yourself that all beyond is too much, and to make the word of GOD speak a language which will suit this desire you have of keeping the praise of men, you may as soon prevail upon us to think it is dark night at mid-day, as that you have renounced the world and the things of it. If at any rate the desire of man's esteem be your idol, if you value your knowledge, learning, wealth, or other accomplishments, because of the income of worldly esteem they bring you in, not because of the glory you may bring to GOD, or the good you may do to men by them; if you sacrifice to the pride of life, and some way or other determine to be of *importance* as well as you can, it is a manifest point that you are of the world.—But besides these, there is still another question to be resolved. Are you, or are you not renouncing the *men* of the world? that is, their customs and maxims, the influence of their example, and in short the whole authority which the usage of a wicked generation has established, and their manner of using the world and the things of it? Time will not permit me minutely to consider the several particulars comprehended under these heads; but the resolution of this single question shall serve to decide the whole, to wit, 'Do we make the word of GOD or the ways of men the measure of our conduct?' This will seem an absurd inquiry at first thought by those who, while they are living as others do, are at the same time professed readers and hearers of the scriptures. "What (will such say) do you think we do not believe our Bibles? or that we are so stupid as to judge that to be right, though all the world should concur in saying it, which we hear GOD himself

ſelf tell us to be wrong?" This, I confeſs, is talking well: but where is the correſponding practice? If you do not ſearch the ſcriptures really to know what the will of GOD is in every caſe, but are eaſily ſatisfied with 'every body ſays ſo,' and 'every body does ſo,' and think it very ſtrange if any will not 'do like the reſt of the world,' I beſeech you, after all, what is this more than fine talking? The moſt of people go down with the current of the times, and take it for granted all is well, if they do not that which the world reckons ill. 'It is ſcandalous;' that and that alone is the meaſure of forbearance; the world will not bear you out in what is ſcandalous. To be a drunkard, thief, whoremonger, is ſcandalous; upon ſuch things the world has paſt ſentence, ſo you judge them very bad. To be liberal and decent, this the world countenances, and this you approve. But when a man denies himſelf, and begins to lead a heavenly life, 'O it is too much,' the world cries, and ſo you join in the cry. I pray you, what does all this prove, but that you live, think, and act upon the authority of a wicked world, and not upon the authority of GOD? Brethren, many now are the years that in the execution of my office I have been declaring to you the mind and will of GOD concerning you, and I verily think GOD can witneſs for me that I have not wittingly kept back or falſified any part of it through fear of diſguſting and diſpleaſing you. But now, what has been the fruit of this my much preaching, and your much hearing? Is it this after all, that you are all living after your Bibles, and not after the ways of the world? Alas! it is not ſo; it is not ſo. Many, many of you join hand in hand, and keep each other in counte-

nance in living directly contrary to your Bibles. And all I need tell such, (alas! they well know themselves) that they are wholly living after the world?

And now, my brethren, after this inquiry, is the report from every breast, what say we, 'Are we of GOD? or are we of the world?'

If we are still of the world, I doubt not our consciences have been telling us so, while the point has been under examination. Every child of this world here present has been testifying, and is now unavoidably testifying, against himself, 'I am not of God.' And will you consider what is implied in that testimony? Not of GOD! What can be more uncomfortable than that thought? Not of GOD! Then GOD is not *your* GOD; you have no interest in his almighty power, fatherly care, and pardoning grace. He does not regard you as a child; he has no provision for you in his family, he does not comfort you with his presence, you do not taste of his reviving communications, you are a forlorn creature, living in the world without GOD, without rest, without content, full of fears, big with anxieties, torn with disappointments; you seek peace, but do you find her? you fly to pleasure but she dwells not there; you run to company but you cannot meet her; you say wealth shall buy her for me, but you discover she is not to be purchased with gold. Do not you, children of this world, discern how unhappy you are in the midst of your all? But then what apprehensions beset you at the thought of death? when it does but threaten you, then what a terror possesses your spirits! you are at present miserable every day; yet because ye dread being more so hereafter,

hereafter, you are willing to drag on in your chains. For, you sons of care, you daughters of pleasure, you that give yourselves up to the pride of learning and wealth, to the pomp of distinction and appearance, what are your prospects in death, and after death? What in the world of spirits? What, when the whole fabric of the world shall be dissolved in flames? What are they in the new heaven and earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness? Could you persuade yourselves there is no sin in your choice, yet there would be infinite folly. For what folly equal to preferring a perishing world to an eternal GOD? But is there not sin in such a choice? Look at the glorious perfections of GOD, and say. Ask, who made the world, and speak. Inquire why GOD gave you a being, and declare. Consider by whose bounty you live, and tell me. O Sirs, there is infinite sin in your choice, because infinite dishonour is done by it to GOD. And unless you are prevailed upon to make a better choice, you will soon find there is infinite ruin in it too. When the day of mercy and patience is over, then will you know what a fearful thing you have been doing in determinately and daily taking the world for your portion.

Wherefore let us all consider, what a glorious privilege we are all called to, and as many as believe in JESUS CHRIST have an interest in, I mean that of having GOD for a portion. O what a heaven would this earth be were this the case of all! And how much of heaven does it bring down into the souls of those whose case it is! To have the all-sufficient, the living, the ever-present, the almighty, the eternal Being for our GOD, guarding us with his arm, guiding us with

his hand, keeping us under his eye, directing all to us, and over-ruling all for us, dwelling among us, making us his care, conducting us through all the distressful passages of life, comforting us in a dying hour, receiving our souls to the nearest fellowship with himself in the moment of their separation, raising up and glorifying these present houses of clay, forming a new habitation for us, whence sorrow, fear and sin shall be banished for ever! Who can describe the thousandth part of the blessedness there is in having GOD for a portion? I cannot. And yet I can say enough of it to load with the justest confusion all those who will have their portion in this world. And to think, my dear brethren, that GOD offers himself to us to be our GOD and portion; that at infinite expence he has opened the way through the blood of JESUS to his being so! To think that he is inviting us to it by all the endearments of love, and urging us to accept it by all the tender arguments of goodness, pity, and patience!—Sirs, I can only ask you if *David* speaks not the very truth, *Blessed are the people who have the Lord for their God?* O that we could all say with him, *Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none upon earth that I can desire besides thee!* I beseech you let us not rest till we can say that word with sincere hearts, to the glory of GOD, and to the present unspeakable comfort, and future infinite happiness of our souls through JESUS CHRIST our Lord.

SER-

SERMON VI.

ACTS xvi. 30.

What must I do to be saved?

THE first and second parts of the baptismal renunciation having been explained, I am now to speak of the last part of it, the renouncing *all the sinful lusts of the flesh.*

And here also we will first explain, and afterwards improve.

The Flesh.—By this is not meant man's body, which in itself considered is not sinful, any more than the natural appetites and passions thereof, which in themselves are good, and under due regulations serve to very good purposes. But by the flesh is understood the principle of sin that is in fallen man, very frequently called in scripture by this name. It is that sinful principle in our nature contracted by *Adam* through his eating the forbidden fruit, and from him derived down to all who are naturally engendred of him.

Lusts of the Flesh; that is, its desires, inclinations, imaginations, or affections. The flesh is like some corrupt fountain that is always sending out bad water, or it resembles a filthy carrion which gives forth continually its nauseous and poisonous stench. Just as the good nature of an angel is always bringing forth good motions and desires, so the evil nature of fallen creatures is as plentiful the contrary way, ceaselessly bursting out into bad and pernicious motions and lusts.

Sinful

Sinful lusts of the Flesh.—I have said that the necessary appetites of the body, such as hunger, thirst and the like, are not sinful: but the lusts of corrupt nature are so, being directly contrary to GOD and duty, moving us only to sin, and the very immediate and principal causes of all actual sin in thought, word, and deed, when they are indulged and gratified.

All the sinful lusts of the Flesh.—And they are exceeding many. In which regard the flesh is called the body of sin, because like the natural it has many members. Yet they are all reduced to two general heads by St. *Paul*, when he says, *Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit.* Where by the filthiness of the flesh, he means all such lusts as are properly sensual; and by the filthiness of the spirit, all such lusts as are properly spiritual. The head of sensual lusts includes the several branches of uncleanness, intemperance, sloth, idleness, ease, pleasure, to all which sensual nature inclines us, and after all which it is perpetually lusting. The other head is spiritual filthiness, the sum of which in one word is pride, including self-sufficiency, conceit, self-will, impatience, unbelief, disobedience, covetousness, jealousy, envy, malice, revenge, cruelty, all which are either pride itself or the genuine effects of it, and all of which together (covetousness only excepted, which is appropriate to man) do constitute the character of the devil, and are the real principles of all his conduct.

Now all these sensual and spiritual lusts being naturally in us, and actually having the whole direction of us until by grace they are dethroned and brought into subjection, the true Christian knowing this, being

adviſed of their ſinfulneſs, being brought to hate and lothe them, and to long earneſtly for an increaſing freedom from their influence, and for a greater mortification of that principle of ſin out of which they iſſue, doth in the ſtrength of GOD declare his rejection of their dominion, his ſtedfaſt purpoſe to oppoſe and not to gratify their motions, and to uſe all poſſible means for weakening and crucifying their force and power, ſaying, *I renounce all the ſinful luſts of the fleſh.* Including in this expreſſion the following declarations: "I will no longer ſerve ſin, neither will I yield my members as inſtruments of unrighteouſneſs to it. I ſee and deteſt that accurſed body of ſin that dwelleth in me; I declare an irreconcileable war againſt it; too often have I followed the devices and deſires of my own heart, I declare war againſt my natural ſelf, I will be no more the willing, ready ſlave of my ſenſual and ſpiritual luſts, by the help of GOD I will no more obey the brutal and deviliſh inclination of my moſt ſinful nature; it ſhall be my endeavour to watch and to oppoſe their every motion; if by force they gain advantage they ſhall not maintain it, and ſince I know them to be crafty I will labour to find them out, and when I ſee, I will not ſpare them; I will not hearken to their importunities, I will not be tired out by the frequency and obſtinacy of their pleadings, I will not yield to their cry, be what they contend for of never ſo great importance to my preſent intereſt, eaſe, or reputation, and if what they aſk be never ſo little, I will not grant it. They will, I know, have an influence in all I think, ſay, and do; but I will endeavour, by the grace of GOD, it ſhall be leſs and leſs.

I fear

I fear and expect they will many times gain incidental advantages over me, but, in the might of JESUS, they shall not have possession; I renounce them all. I will no longer seek to please and gratify my carnal, proud self; no longer will I give myself up to my sensual inclinations in a life of uncleanness, intemperance, sloth, idleness, ease, or pleasure; neither any more will I indulge to pride, to direct my conduct on the hellish principles of conceit and self-will, anger and resentment, malice and envy, revenge and cruelty, the praise of men and the pride of life. Such a conduct, both sensual and proud, I absolutely disclaim; all the motions of my depraved heart that would lead me thereto I will resist; and that body of sin, out of which such evil motions perpetually arise, I will pursue unto the death. And all this, and whatever else is implied in hating, rejecting, fighting against, and crucifying the flesh with its affections and lusts, I do intend and desire, and purpose and promise to perform, when I say, I renounce all the sinful lusts of the flesh."

Let this suffice for the explanation. And let us pass on to the improvement.

And here let us make inquiry.

"Are we living in the outward practice of any of these lusts of the flesh?" I say, *of any of them*, because you see our profession is to renounce them all. Are we living none of us in the outward indulgence of any *sensual* lusts? I have shewn you what is meant by sensual lusts, namely, uncleanness, intemperance, sloth, idleness, ease, and pleasure. Are we living none of us in any of the sins of *uncleanness?* These for the most part are secret sins, and such as, if known at any time,

time, are *chiefly* discovered by their effects, which oftentimes bring many to public shame, and more often others to noisome diseases that will not be concealed. While also there are kinds and degrees of this sin which can only be known to GOD and a man's own conscience, so closely are they kept from observation. But GOD knows all their practices; and all such persons also know in their consciences that he holds them guilty, and that they are the servants of lust. But other sins are not so hid; let me then inquire farther, Are none of us living in *intemperance?* Intemperance especially relates to gluttony and drunkenness. Are we not living in gluttony? Certainly there is such a sin as intemperance in meat. And if we are grown nice and delicate, if the plain food of our fathers disgusts us, if we are for elegant dishes beyond what we can afford, or, though we can afford them, if we indulge our thoughts in expecting them, and our palates in using them immoderately; more especially if any of us are so careful to feed our bellies that we let our backs go without a covering, and if we like a thing, are resolved to have it without caring what it costs us, it is very evident we cannot clear ourselves of the sin of gluttony. And then as to drunkenness, how are so many alehouses maintained, how are so many families ruined and brought to live on the public by frequenting them, how are there so many nightly clubs, how is so much precious time spent in places prepared for the purpose, and how are so many grown old before they have attained half their days, if there be no such thing as drunkenness among us? But do we know that *sloth* and *idleness*, *ease* and *pleasure*, (for,

(for, that I may not be tedious, I put them together) are alſo ſenſual luſts? And that to live in the practice of them is as much a life of indulgence as if we were to give ourſelves up to the groſſer ſins of lewdneſs or intemperance? Surely we know it not, elſe many would not be content to live in them as they do. For what is the life of many, but a mere continuation of doing nothing, becauſe they ſeem to themſelves to have nothing to do, and there is not preciſely any thing much amiſs in what they do, therefore all were well? But, brethren, to ſleep away days and weeks, and months and years, in ſauntering, chatting, and viſiting, in parties of pleaſure abroad, and inſignificance at home, however it may appear harmleſs in the eye of the world, will paſs for no better than ſenſuality in the eye of God. But to go on from ſenſual indulgences in the outward conduct to ſpiritual. Are we none of us in the outward indulgence of *ſpiritual* luſts? What I mean by the outward indulgence of them is their habitual direction of our behaviour in the world. Wherefore if you are carried along by conceit and ſelf-opinion in your converſations and conduct, if you are ſelf-willed, raſh, and over bearing, if your behaviour be planned upon the calculation of exalting and maintaining your name in the world; if in your demeanor you endeavour to make every one think you a perſon of *merit* and *importance*; if you will bear no contradiction, but treat all with anger and reſentment who do not conform to your ways; if, finally, you live for yourſelf, and none are the better for you any farther than they ſerve to gratify your humours, or to promote your intereſts; if any of this be your outward conduct, all who know you are witneſſing againſt you that you are under the

influence

influence of unmortified pride. They see it in your whole conduct, though you perhaps suspect it not. And if you will not see, if you will not consider what you do, nor examine into the principles upon which you act, it cannot be wondered if, while all about you know you to be a slave, you alone suspect nothing of the matter. You can see and complain of the pride that reigns in the conduct of others; their self-seeking, self-will, impatience, conceit, and setting themselves off as they do, render them intolerable to you. You wonder no one tells them of it, you admire they do not see it themselves, while, in the mean time, you are looking upon your own picture, not in the least imagining it to be yours, or that it is any thing like you. Yet methinks there are some circumstances in a proud character and carriage, that you must be wilfully blind if you do not see them in yourself, while every day you are acting them over. What can you think if in all companies you are industriously and artfully setting yourself, your abilities, gifts, or possessions out to view? or what, if you can bear no contradiction, but all must be and do as you would have them in every trifle? What, if every thing and nothing puts you in a passion, and if you break every tie of duty to gratify resentment? What, if every where and at all seasons you become all things to all men that you may gain their praise and esteem? Surely a conduct like this speaks plainly enough, and if you do not understand that you are serving your spiritual, or in another word, your devilish lusts, it is even because you will not.

But from the outward practice of any of these lusts, let us pass to the inward. For I would not have you deceived.

ceived. And I know there were of old, and that there are ſtill Phariſees in the world, who contrive to keep the outſide tolerably clean, at leaſt in their judgment of the matter, while all is defilement within. Now therefore, my dear friends, however it appear without, how is it in truth within? Are we there renouncing all the ſinful luſts of the fleſh? It is an eaſy matter to ſay I do; and for the moſt part they will be moſt forward to ſay they do, who are the greateſt ſtrangers to the doing ſo. Wherefore I will propoſe to you certain queſtions whereby you may certainly know, whether you be or not renouncing all the ſinful luſts of the fleſh by a true oppoſition made to them in your heart. *Firſt*, Have you found out that there are ſuch ſenſual and deviliſh luſts in you? If you have not, it is plain you cannot be rejecting and reſiſting them; and if you will ſtill ſay I renounce all the ſinful luſts of the fleſh, when you know not you have any ſinful luſts within you, you make it evident that you can mean even nothing by what you ſay. And accordingly when you are told that ſuch luſts dwell in you, that you are every one of you ſenſual, prone to every kind and degree of uncleanneſs, intemperance, and carnality, ſo that you are naturally ready for the very groſſeſt impurities; when you are told, that you are alſo full of every ſpiritual luſt, that your natural heart is a ſink of pride, conceit, envy, malice, revenge, cruelty, and every deviliſh luſt; I ſay, when you are told of this, are you not ready to cry out in indignation, "What I? I defy the world; and I will have you to know I am not ſuch a beaſt and ſuch a devil as you make me." Well then, you profeſs and openly

avow

avow you have not ſuch ſenſual and deviliſh luſts in you; ſo it is paſt diſpute you cannot be renouncing them. O what a lamentable ignorance is there in this Chriſtian country of the fall of man. Every child owns by rote that we are born in ſin, but for any real knowledge of the ſinfulneſs of the heart, not one of a thouſand has the leaſt ſuſpicion of any ſuch thing. And yet it is moſt certain, that the knowledge of this is the only groundwork of being in the practice of Chriſtianity. —But you ſay, you do know this, you are fully ſenſible that all theſe ſenſual and ſpiritual luſts which I have been deſcribing dwell in you, for you find them always at work, and can by experience teſtify this ſcripture to be true, *that every imagination of the thoughts of man's heart is only evil continually.* In this caſe, I aſk, *Secondly*, Do you really hate, and long to be delivered from them all whatever they be? This St. *Paul* certainly did, for he cries in the ſenſe of his hidden luſts, *O wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from the body of this death?* Look at your ſenſual luſts, and look at your ſpiritual luſts; look eſpecially at that luſt, the indulgence of which is moſt convenient for you, which you cannot deny without peculiar ſuffering, which is the very idol of your natural heart, and try if you can ſay, calling GOD to witneſs, "This I hate, even this I long to be delivered from, with this I would not make the leaſt compliance for his name's ſake." If you can truly ſay this, concerning every kind of pride, and every kind of ſenſuality, not cheriſhing or approving iniquity in your heart, it is manifeſt that you have the love of GOD in you, and in the choice of your heart are rejecting all evil ways. But if you only

only know that you have many lusts of the flesh in you; if, notwithstanding this knowledge, they be not your burden and your grief; if pride or passion, if resentment or vanity, carry you away, and you take little thought of the matter, are speedily reconciled to yourself, and soon forget it as if nothing had been amiss, it is not conceivable how you can hate the lusts of your flesh. Now if you judge you have a comfortable answer in this respect also, I go on, (for preventing mistakes in some, and confirming in others the confidence of GOD's grace working effectually in them) to ask, *Thirdly*, Whether your views of the lusts of the flesh are so humbling, that while they bring you to the blood of CHRIST for remission of the guilt of them, they also bring you to sue with importunity for the spirit to deliver you from the power of them, and to mortify them in you continually? You do not see your lusts in such a hateful light as shall dispose you to renounce them, unless they bring you thus to the blood and grace of CHRIST, and that with a suitable importunity. It is the sight of the holiness of GOD that can alone make any one hate sin within him, and when it does this, he sees himself so defiled by it that he cannot think of standing before GOD but in the righteousness of CHRIST, while also he will be earnestly calling upon GOD to deliver him from the detestable power of it. Wherefore however much you may seem to hate your lusts (and without hating them you cannot renounce them) yet still you are deceived, if they do not bring you on your knees, and cause you to cry frequently and earnestly for forgiveness of them, and for grace against them.

them. Surely you cannot think you are humbled for that which you do not ask the pardon of, or that you hate that you do not pray to be set free from. So that if the deep sense of the sinful lusts of your flesh do not lie at the bottom of your prayers, as the very foundation-stone of all your intreaties for pardon, and all your cries for grace, you only pray in formality, and are neither hating nor renouncing them. But if you say you do thus pray against them, I ask yet, *Fourthly*, Whether you are actually, in the strength prayed for, fighting against them? It is this which proves the truth of the whole. Are you actually at war with your hidden lusts? I do not ask, take notice, whether the victory is always on your side: but I ask, whether you be really at war with them? Doubtless you ought to watch and strive that at no time they gain advantage of you. But when they have, do you suffer them to keep it? There lies the point. If they have thrust themselves in unawares watching an opportunity, and by and by you thrust them again as those you will not entertain in your house, it is plain they came in like thieves and have no right as masters. But now if you give them entertainment, and suffer them to dwell quietly with you, you will never be able to persuade yourself, and much less GOD, that you hold them as enemies. The main question therefore is, Are we at actual war with our lusts? If not, in the very nature of the thing, they have necessarily the dominion over us, for they are by nature in possession. And consequently, let us seem to hate them, and seem to pray against them never so much, in truth we do not the one nor the other, but

love

love and entertain them at bottom, although in the apprehensions of GOD's wrath against us we may in a selfish way wish to be rid of them.

By this time I would hope we are all come to some conclusion, whether or no we are renouncing all the sinful lusts of the flesh. In the examination of this interesting point I have been the more particular, both that they who are serving their lusts might have no pretence for ignorance that they are doing so, and that they who are set at liberty from them might rejoice and praise GOD for their deliverance.

We will conclude with this one thought, which is suited to alarm the one and quicken the other of you, namely, There is an infinite sinfulness in the lusts of our flesh, whether *sensual* or *spiritual*, because they lead in a direct opposition to GOD, *that* as a portion, *this* as a master. Sensuality says, indulgence is a better happiness for me than GOD; and pride cries, it is better to be one's own master than to serve the most High. But what dishonour is done to GOD by so base a preference! What, do we set GOD so very low in our estimation, that we reckon the poor indulgences of brute creatures, to eat and drink and play, preferable to the favour, the presence, the joy of communion with the ever Blessed! And do we treat GOD as such a tyrant that we cannot endure his laws, and holding his service intolerable do we set up for ourselves? O Sirs, the angels above do not thus think of GOD. How infinite is their joy in beholding his face! how unmeasurable their pleasure in fulfilling his commandments, hearkening to the voice of his words! What infinite evil is there not in this carnal, this spiritual lust?

luſt? My dear brethren, we ſhall be all fully ſenſible of it another day. Will not that ſoul feel it in the bottom of hell, who would not quit his beloved luſts? In the bitterneſs of his ſpirit he will cry, "There is no hope in GOD now, and without God what horror! I feel, I feel what it is to be without GOD." And the converted ſaint, exalted to the higheſt heaven, when he knows and falls down in raviſhing wonder before the Majeſty of GOD, what will he think of pride? when he enjoys the everlaſting pleaſures at GOD's right hand, what will he think of carnal gratifications? But GOD and Sin are the very ſame now that they will be hereafter. O that we would be wiſe, that we would conſider our latter end. God give us all grace effectually and more abundantly to do ſo, for his mercy's ſake towards us in JESUS CHRIST our Lord.

SERMON VII.

ACTS xvi. 30, 31.

What muſt I do to be ſaved? And they ſaid, Believe on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and thou ſhalt be ſaved.

WE have already treated of the firſt branch of the baptiſmal Vow, namely, the renunciation of the devil, the world, and the fleſh; and paſs on now to the ſecond part of it, faith. What

this faith is, its neceſſity unto ſalvation, and the ſure promiſe of mercy made unto it, are plainly marked out in the queſtion made by the Jailer, and the anſwer given him by *Paul* and *Silas*, when he aſks them, *What he muſt do to be ſaved?* They have but one anſwer to give him, which is, that he muſt *believe on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt*. This was the only way, and it was ſufficient; if he did this, *he ſhould be ſaved*. True faith in JESUS CHRIST, that is, ſuch a faith as engages to die unto ſin and to live unto GOD, is the faith here intended. But we are here to conſider it in its nature, and not in its effects of renunciation and obedience, the former of which has been already ſpoken to, as the latter will be in its proper place.

Introductory to a particular explication of the Creed in its ſeveral parts, it will be proper, *Firſt*, To lay before you in one view the whole ſubject matter of this little, but excellent ſummary of chriſtian principles. *Secondly*, What is the true nature of faith concerning them.

Firſt, What is the ſubject matter of the apoſtles creed. Now the faith in queſtion being plainly divine faith, inaſmuch as it is purely converſant about GOD and things of a ſpiritual nature; and this divine faith being alſo chriſtian faith, it muſt needs be, that that Creed, which contains the articles of this faith, hath regard unto GOD, in the Mediator CHRIST JESUS. For which reaſon, the whole of the chriſtian faith is often expreſſed in the ſcripture by the ſingle phraſe, *Believing in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt*; becauſe in him it is that GOD preſents himſelf unto us in ſcripture as the object of our faith and hope. Theſe articles

articles therefore do not relate to GOD absolutely, but to GOD in CHRIST; for GOD, absolutely considered, is not set forth as the object of faith to us sinners; such indeed he is to angels, and to perfect creatures that never sinned, but he is not a GOD to us otherwise than through a Redeemer. So that the substance of the Creed is GOD, as a covenant-GOD in CHRIST; consequently, to believe the articles of the christian faith, is to believe in the one GOD, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as in the respective offices of the three divine persons he stands related to us in the Mediator; in the Father, the Maker of all things, as a Father to us; in the Son, as the Redeemer; in the Holy Ghost, as the sanctifier; and all in and through JESUS CHRIST; in whom the living members of his body, the Church, we are assured, have fellowship and communion with this ever-blessed GOD as their GOD, and therewith, present forgiveness of sins in this life, and an assured title to a glorious resurrection, and an everlasting life hereafter. In short, as without a Mediator we have no relation to GOD but that of children of wrath; so in CHRIST he is a GOD unto us for time and for eternity.

Take notice therefore, that whosoever repeats this creed, as the profession of his faith, does thereby virtually declare, that he stedfastly believes himself, otherwise than in CHRIST, an alien and an outcast from GOD, a child of wrath, and an heir of hell; and that it is no otherwise than in JESUS CHRIST, and for his sake, that he has the least confidence to call GOD his GOD; or the least hope of forgiveness of his sins in this life; and of happiness in the life which is to come. Now, brethren, do we seriously mean

this when we repeat the Creed? If we do not, we either ſpeak without any meaning or diſtinct thought at all, when we ſay over theſe words; (which no doubt is too frequently the caſe) or elſe if we do repeat the words, under any knowledge of the ſenſe of them, we do it for decency's ſake, to conform to the cuſtomary modes of worſhip in the country where we live, though in reality we believe nothing of the matter. In this caſe, we do no better than lie unto GOD. How can we do ſo more ſolemnly, and with more ſin, than when in his public worſhip we avow that with our mouths, which we diſavow with our hearts? And yet there are ſome, who will contend, "GOD will not damn any of his creatures," as they affect to phraſe it, the better to colour over a flat denial of the whole doctrines of the goſpel, and a determined purpoſe of continuing in an impenitent ſtate. There are others, who inſiſt, if a man be honeſt and civil, and charitable to the poor, it matters not what his ſentiments are about religion; for with ſuch a man all ſhall be well. How contrary theſe tenets are to the Chriſtian ſcheme of ſalvation, contained in the Creed, every one ſees; as alſo no one can help ſeeing what a groſs abſurdity, not to ſay impiety, is expreſſed in their conduct, who, while they hold ſuch antichriſtian tenets, do nevertheleſs appear in Chriſtian aſſemblies, and by their repetition of the Creed in common with the congregation, publicly declare (for this is the very deſign of every man's reciting the Creed) that they ſtedfaſtly believe there is no ſalvation out of JESUS CHRIST; and that the wrath of GOD, under which all are born, abideth on him who believeth not on the Son of GOD.

From

From the subject matter of the Creed, as it has been now set forth, I cannot but observe farther, how the doctrine of the Trinity is fully contained in it, which is particularly observed by the compilers of the Catechism as what is chiefly to be learnt in these articles of belief; "I learn to believe in GOD the Father, "GOD the Son, and GOD the Holy Ghost," ascribing to each his respective office. Now if, by reciting the Creed publickly in the congregation, we profess to believe a Trinity of persons in the Godhead;—and if at the same time, as was just now shewn, we do thereby also profess to believe, that there is salvation in none other but JESUS CHRIST, then what reason can they who recite this Creed assign for their refusing to join in that which is commonly called the Creed of *Athanasius?* This latter Creed is, as to the matter of it, in substance the very same with the former; the doctrine of the Trinity, and the one only way of salvation by JESUS CHRIST, are not a jot more in the one than the other. And whoever recites the Apostles Creed, does by so doing, declare himself satisfied with every tittle contained in the Creed of *Athanasius*, the damnatory clauses not excepted: for when, by reciting the Apostles Creed, he declares, that there is but one way of salvation, he of necessity consents, that whoever do not hold that way shall undoubtedly and everlastingly perish: so that, after all the clamour raised against the Creed of *Athanasius*, nothing lies against it which does not equally lie against the Apostles Creed. And, in truth, the cry for having it laid aside arises from nothing else but a disbelief of the grand doctrines of the gospel, that of the Trinity, and that of salvation

by JESUS CHRIST only; points which do not at all suit with the pride of an unhumbled heart, and which therefore are wished to be taken out of the church; but which, whatever creeds should be rejected or used, cannot be laid aside without striking out the very being of Christianity, and leaving CHRIST utterly out of, what in that case would be falsely called, his Church. But,

Secondly, What is the true nature of faith concerning these articles? In explaining this matter I shall need your attention, while I observe,

1. What is the nature of faith or believing in general. And this is, assenting to a thing as true, upon the report and testimony of others. What I see with my own eyes, what is made out to me upon the evidence of my own senses, I am not said to *believe*, but to *know*. Believing comes another way; and is my assent gained by being told a thing by others. A person of this place being in the neighbourhood, and seeing a house on fire, knows it; when he comes and informs us of it, we believe it, both he and we assent to the thing, that the house is on fire; but then, he because he saw it, we because he told us of it. The one, upon knowledge; the other, by faith.

2. The only ground therefore of belief is testimony. In which testimony two things are necessary to gain our assent to what is told us; the first, that we think the person testifying a capable judge of the fact he relates; the second, that we are satisfied he is honest in the relation he makes of it. Were a person out of his senses, or a notorious liar, to tell you he saw such and such a thing, your assent would be either absolutely refused,

refuſed, or, at moſt, go no farther than a ſuſpicion that the thing might perhaps be. But did a perſon whom you judged a capable obſerver, and an honeſt relater, aſſure you of it, you would not withhold your aſſent.

3. The teſtimony upon which you give aſſent is different, according to the nature of the things teſtified of. Things human we aſſent unto upon the teſtimony of man, if competent and faithful; but things divine we cannot aſſent unto upon man's teſtimony (becauſe the things of GOD no man knoweth) but upon the teſtimony of GOD. Wherefore though human teſtimony may well beget human faith, that is, belief concerning human things; yet human teſtimony cannot beget divine faith, that is, belief of divine things. Man cannot know the things of GOD any farther than he is told them by GOD himſelf, one way or other; ſo that divine faith ſtands ſimply upon divine teſtimony.

4. Human teſtimony being no ground of divine faith, therefore there is in the world what is called by that name, and is not; as alſo, there is what is called divine faith, and is ſo. There is in the world what is called divine faith, yet is not ſo, being what is taken up upon man's teſtimony. And this is the faith that is common in the world. The moſt believe the ſcriptures not from any real diſcernment that they are truly the record of GOD, but on no other footing than becauſe they are currently received as ſuch in the country and church in which they were born and bred; juſt as the *Turks* believe the Alcoran to be a divine book, becauſe every one about them ſays it is from GOD. This every ſenſible perſon ſees to be mere prejudice, and which ſets Chriſtianity on that very footing, upon which all

the various things that are called Religion throughout the divers nations of the world, may be alike juſtified; ſince all they, as well as we, can ſay, it is the religion of my country, and all ſay it is the true religion. But poſſibly, though the abſurdity be glaring, yet the true cauſe of ſuch a falſe faith may not have been enough attended to, namely, the ſtanding upon the incompetent teſtimony of man for the belief of divine things; and in the want of ſuch a conſideration, many, who have ſeen the abſurdity of believing thus upon cuſtom, may have run upon an abſurdity not a jot leſs glaring, by taking it for granted there was no truth in Chriſtianity, becauſe the moſt of thoſe who profeſs it are capable of giving no better a reaſon for their doing ſo. But,

5. Beſides this vulgar prejudice miſnamed faith, as ſtanding only on man's teſtimony, there is alſo true faith, ſtanding on the teſtimony of GOD. And this is the faith here in queſtion, the true ſaving faith, to which all the promiſes of the goſpel belong. Concerning this ſaving faith four things muſt be noted, as abundantly ſufficient to diſtinguiſh it from whatever elſe is called faith, (1.) The ſubject, or perſon, in whom it is wrought, an humbled ſinner. The promiſes of the goſpel are abſolutely confined to the humble; ſo that neither he who is not brought to a ſenſe of his loſt eſtate as a ſinner, nor even he who, awakened to a ſenſe of his ruinous condition, is only deſirous that he may not periſh, can be the ſubject of this faith; but he who, beſides ſeeing his danger, is convinced of the evil of his ſins againſt the bleſſed GOD, their heinous guilt and deep demerit, and earneſtly longs after

after reconciliation with him; who, in oppoſition to the unawakened, knows himſelf to be a ſinner; and, in oppoſition to the only awakened, not alone deſires to eſcape hell, and go to heaven, from a mere ſelfiſh regard to his own happineſs, but rather deſires the approbation, favour and love of GOD, as his chief good; this is the only perſon in whom this ſaving faith is ever wrought. (2.) The object, or the thing believed by this humbled ſoul, which is the promiſe, GOD in CHRIST, holding himſelf out to the ſinner by and in the promiſe. GOD in CHRIST is the object upon which faith faſtens; none other can ſatisfy the humbled ſoul's occaſions, nor in any ſort fill up its deſires. It is no true faith if CHRIST be not the ſupreme object of the ſoul's deſire; if there be a looking to other than him for hope or happineſs. (3.) Beſides the ſubject and the object, there is the teſtimony of GOD unto the promiſe, making out the truth of it to the humbled ſoul. The promiſe lies in the ſcripture, which the Spirit opens and explains to the mind by his ſecret illuminations, in anſwer to the ſoul's inquiry, ſearch, and prayer; making it plainer and plainer; ſhewing the ſuitableneſs of it to GOD's glory, and the ſoul's neceſſities; anſwering and ſilencing objections to the truth of it, and gaining a belief of it in the ſoul upon the authority of a faithful GOD, who cannot lie, and will not change. The teſtimony here is as immediately and directly GOD's, as a man's teſtimony to what he declares is his. And this GOD's teſtimony is not made out by any new revelation to the ſoul (that being merely an enthuſiaſtical fancy, and a very dangerous opinion) but by caſting light upon the promiſe,

explaining it, and making it out in the mind by a rational discovery of the evidences upon which it stands, as they lie in the scripture. Upon this follows, in the fourth place, the assent, which is always in proportion to the degree of clearness wherewith the divine testimony is made in the soul. But wherever it is gained in any degree it is saving, having the very same effects in kind, though not in degree, as when it is grown up to absolute assurance past all doubt; and particularly warring against the fear of GOD's wrath, from a sense of guilt and unworthiness, which is the most proper office and business of faith. Having shewn you now what the true nature of faith is, I would observe,

6. That according to the account given of it, it must needs admit of the division into weak and strong. The belief is in proportion to the testimony, which the Spirit may give with a convincing fulness all at once, if he pleases, as it looks as if he did in the case of St. *Paul:* but it appears by the *Bereans*, that this is not always the case; for it is said of them, that *they searched the scriptures daily whether these things were so*; whereby it is manifestly implied, that GOD's testimony was not given them all at once in its satisfying fulness and incontestible evidence. And experience shews that this is ordinarily the case, as is most reasonable it should, to excite our care, diligence, prayer, and meditation for increase in this great gift of GOD. GOD's testimony lies in the scripture, to which we cannot assent any farther than we know it. But this scripture-testimony is of large extent and scope, in a competent knowledge of all which the mind must be instructed before it can attain unto such an assent as will admit of

no

no doubt. And although it be the Spirit that makes out this ſcripture-teſtimony, yet there is no reaſon to expect he will do it, but increaſingly, in correſpondence with our ſearching the ſcriptures, and in anſwer to our prayers.

And therefore to conclude, let me addreſs a word of advice for the increaſe of faith.

Firſt, We ſhould be abundantly diligent in humbling ourſelves before GOD for our manifold and daily ſins and provocations; this is our duty; but the effect of it, in regard of increaſe of faith, is manifeſt, inaſmuch as ſuch exerciſes keep the ſoul awake to ſee its real vileneſs and utter want of CHRIST, and thereby preſerve and increaſe its longings and deſires after him. This experience teaches; as we remit or are diligent in theſe exerciſes, we are cold or earneſt after CHRIST.

Secondly, We muſt hear, read, and meditate on the ſcriptures, in a dependence on divine illumination to make out to us from them more evidently GOD's teſtimony concerning his Son JESUS CHRIST. GOD's word muſt be our ſtudy, as often as we can, and when it is not, we muſt be recollecting what we have learnt from it, and pondering upon it on all occaſions; elſe, as I may ſay, we do not give the Spirit opportunity to explain, and fix on our minds the teſtimony of GOD.

Thirdly, We muſt uſe the faith we have. This is a ſpecial means of increaſe. *Behold he giveth more grace.* Stir up your faith to oppoſe all ſinful fears; keep it in exerciſe upon GOD as he appears in his glorious majeſty, and mercy in JESUS CHRIST. Loſe not the ſight of the great Redeemer, ſeated, as he now is, at the right hand of the Majeſty on High,

and manifested, as he will soon be, in the clouds of heaven. Let your faith in the divine promises, such as it is, be constantly kept at work in opposing the whole body of sin, and the special lusts thereof. Stir yourself up unto every duty. See that faith have the chief place in all you do, and in all your approaches unto GOD. See that your faith be working, and you will GOD giving you increase.

Lastly, Be thankfully observant of GOD's faithfulness to his promises in JESUS CHRIST, manifest in his gracious daily dealings with you in soul and body. Compare his dealings with his declarations. Through grace it will wonderfully confirm you to see how they agree. How, as he has said, he hears your prayers; does not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able; heals your backslidings; corrects you in measure; comforts you in all your tribulations. O my friends, to see by long experience from of old, how he has carried us in his hand, and still to this day has not left nor forsaken us; how through his mercies we are not consumed, and still his compassions fail not; to see how his mercies are new to us every morning; and every day he blesses us according to his word, in body, that we live and have health, and every thing needful, and every thing convenient, and every comfortable thing, as it is this day; in soul he keeps us, preventing us with gracious motions, upholding us against our enemies, stirring us up to good, and preserving us from sin. What shall we say to these things? Were the mercies of GOD but one day duly remembered, how should we be forced to own the faithfulness of GOD, and the merits of JESUS CHRIST! The Lord

Lord enable you ſo to do, to the increaſe of your faith and joy, and of his praiſe and glory through JESUS CHRIST.

SERMON VIII.

ACTS xvi. 30, 31.

What muſt I do to be ſaved? And they ſaid, Believe on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and thou ſhalt be ſaved.

YOU have had the nature of divine faith laid before you, and it was ſeen to be believing upon divine teſtimony, which teſtimony lies in the holy ſcriptures, and is made out from them by the Spirit.

I am now to ſpeak of the object of this divine faith, which is GOD, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt. And at preſent more generally of the divine nature, *I believe in God.* And here we muſt inquire,

I. What GOD is.

II. What it is to believe in him.

I. What GOD is. GOD is a *Spirit.* I have no comprehenſion of what I ſay, when I call GOD a Spirit, becauſe I am quite a ſtranger to the nature of Spirit; but when I ſay, GOD is a Spirit, I mean hereby that he is quite contrary to body, that he has neither eyes, nor hands, nor other bodily members, like myſelf; but that he is ſomething to which my reaſonable ſoul is not abſolutely unlike, of which I know that it has certain powers of underſtanding and willing, though

I have

I have not the leaſt notion what the ſubſtance of it is. This Spirit is a *living* Spirit, all creatures, whether ſpiritual or viſible, have their life from other, even from him; he has his life from none. *I am*, is his name; he hath life in himſelf; and all creatures in heaven, hell, and earth, as at firſt they received their life from him, ſo every moment do they live and ſubſiſt by him. GOD is life in himſelf, and therefore life in all. This living Spirit is *infinite*; he is not limited by place, or time, as creatures are, who can only be at one certain place, and who ſubſiſt by ſucceſſion of time. Of them all it muſt be ſaid, they are here in this place, and no where elſe; they had at ſuch a time a beginning, ſtill they are, and the future, when it comes, ſhall make addition to their days: But of GOD it is ſaid, he is every where at once, yet not a part of him here, and another part of him ten millions of miles on the other ſide the ſun, but inconceiveably every where at once in his whole eſſence. The heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain him. As alſo it muſt be ſaid of GOD, He is eternal; he knows neither beginning, nor end; neither paſt, nor to come. Time is no meaſure of his exiſtence; he was, or he will be, cannot be applied to his life. There is no conceiving the manner of his exiſting, nor hardly power in language to expreſs what it is not. He lives without ſucceſſion, and therefore, were it not improper to apply terms expreſſive of time to his life, you might invert the order of paſt and to come, and as well ſay, he will be from everlaſting, he hath been to everlaſting, as he hath been and will be, ſince time is not the meaſure of his being. He is *Almighty*; He

He can do what he pleaſes. He hath done whatever is. With him the power is as eaſy as the will. What he wills he does, and that without the leaſt difficulty, even as if to will and to do were the ſame act. When he ſaid in his heart, Let worlds be; all came forth into Being with infinitely greater eaſe than you move your finger. When he wills again, heaven and earth with all their furniture ſhall paſs away: And at a third command, a new heaven and a new earth ſhall riſe up in their place. He is *bleſſed*; infinitely happy in himſelf, incapable of addition or diminution to his happineſs. The malice or miſery of devils do not take from, the glory and ſervices of angels do not add to, his happineſs. Conſidered in his moral character, as governing the world, he is *holy*, *juſt*, and *good*. All his commands are holy and right, reſulting not from an arbitrary exerciſe of power, but from his own excellency and ſupremacy, and our dependence upon him. All his diſpenſations are juſt and equal; there is no unrighteouſneſs in any thing that he does; they who ſerve him ſhall not be forſaken by him, and they who ſuffer have but their deſerts. Both his commands and his diſpenſations diſplay his goodneſs and good-will towards us, as the one and the other tend to the happineſs of his creatures. To obey his orders is liberty, to enjoy his favour is life. His afflictions are calculated to reclaim, his greateſt judgments are ſuited to warn others; and, ſeeing ſin and miſery are inſeparable, his greateſt judgments, thoſe that are eternal, have a tendency to the general good of his ſubjects, by forcing ſome to return from their evil ways, leſt they periſh after the example of others.

Finally,

Finally, GOD is *unchangeable*. Reſpecting his natural perfections, he muſt be ſo by the excellency and neceſſity of his nature; he cannot ceaſe from being a living, omnipreſent, eternal, almighty, bleſſed GOD, without ceaſing to be GOD. And, in his moral character, he is incapable of change, becauſe of his infinite wiſdom, whereby he adjuſts all things at once by weight and meaſure, without poſſibility of miſtake, or need of alteration. His determinations are ordered in all things and ſure, and therefore they ſtand faſt for ever. Let this ſuffice for the firſt point, What GOD is.

II. What it is to believe in him. There is a wide difference between believing that GOD is, and believing in him. The latter includes (which the former does not) a proper diſpoſition of the heart towards him as GOD. Angels in heaven believe that GOD is, and alſo believe in him by a right diſpoſition of heart towards him. So did *Adam* in innocence. But devils, though they believe GOD is, yet have no belief in him; and the ſons of men, in the ſinful ſtate into which we are fallen, though they ſhould believe GOD to be every thing that he is, yet cannot believe in him, but in that peculiar way by which he offers himſelf to them as their GOD. For the explaining of this, three things muſt be obſerved, as being implied in this firſt article of Chriſtian faith, "I believe in God."

1. It implies a believing GOD to be what he is. For it is impoſſible to be diſpoſed to GOD in love, truſt, and ſervice, or, which is the ſame thing, to believe in him, any farther than he is believed to be that excellent Being who has a right to our hearts, and by his all-ſufficiency is able to ſupport the claim he makes upon

upon our affections. *He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of all them that diligently seek him.* Where, although it is manifest, that believing that such a Being as GOD *is* can have no influence to engage and encourage us sinners to come unto him, unless also we believe, that he is a gracious rewarder of those who seek him; yet on the other hand, believing that GOD is the Being that he *is*, is the necessary foundation of the other; since it is only in proportion to that, that either his judgments or rewards can have any influence upon us. So that manifestly to believe in GOD implies a believing that he is what he is. Now it is evident, that the most of men in fact, and it is certain all men by nature, do not believe GOD to be what he is: living incontestibly without him in the world; his being, perfections and majesty not having the least practical influence upon them, which plainly shews that they have not in them any real belief that GOD is such a Being as he is. Devils believe, and in consequence thereof tremble; but they who lie dead in trespasses and sins, utterly unawakened and unconcerned about their state, are absolutely atheists; for they tremble not, and yet as well as devils would tremble, did they believe that GOD is the Being that he is, and in common with them they must tremble sooner or later, when they shall be made to know that there is a GOD that judgeth the earth. But, for the present, their hearts are so engaged by the things of the world, and their eyes are so blinded by the god of the world, that there is no belief in them that such a Being as GOD is. But how is this, when it is so commonly said, there is no

such

ſuch thing as an atheiſt in the world, and, in proof of that, it is alledged, that the moſt hardened ſinner in it is afraid of death? My anſwer is, May not a man be afraid of death, without having any fear of GOD? But it is urged farther, he is afraid too of what comes after death. This I greatly queſtion, and almoſt venture to deny, if the man has never been awakened. I am ſenſible that the traditionary knowledge there is of GOD left in the world, and handed down from one to another, is ſufficient to raiſe ſuſpicions, and to beget a doubtful apprehenſion in the foreſight of death upon the minds of thoſe who do not believe in reality that GOD is what he is; as alſo I am ſenſible, that this traditionary knowledge is capable of being ſo reaſoned upon by learned men, as to produce in them a ſeemingly ſtrong aſſent to the truth of GOD's Being and perfections; the reality of which I muſt queſtion, ſince it begets in them no fear of GOD, or at leaſt no other than is common to them with others, a ſuperſtitious fear grounded on the vulgar opinion that there is a GOD: but this fear of death or judgment can by no means prove that a man really believes GOD to be what he is, when his hardneſs, obſtinacy and wilfulneſs ſo evidently prove the contrary; it being, I conceive, unqueſtionable, that what we really believe we are neceſſarily affected by in proportion to the importance which that truth is of unto us; conſequently they who are not moved by fear to ſeek after the ſalvation of their ſouls, have no real belief that GOD is what he is, though, through the opinion concerning him that prevails in the world, they may be unable to deny it, and ſo may not be without their

appre-

apprehenſions. There is need therefore of a divine illumination to induce a man to believe that GOD is what he is. And when from the works of nature or providence the being and perfections of GOD are made out in the heart, and a firm aſſent is gained, then the ſinner ſees GOD indeed; but at firſt he ſees him as a conſuming fire. What comfort can he take in an Everlaſting, Almighty, Omnipreſent enemy? Were GOD his friend, what could equal his happineſs? To be kept by an almighty arm, to be guided by unerring wiſdom, to ſtand in the favour of divine majeſty and abſolute ſufficiency; this were glorious! But to look upon him as an enemy and avenger! In this view, every infinite perfection of GOD makes the wretchedneſs ſo much more abundantly deplorable. But out of this ſtate of diſtreſs our profeſſor is ſuppoſed to be paſſed. He ſays, "I believe that GOD is every thing that he is," not with the terror of a ſlave, but with the comfort of a child, who regards what is his father's as having an intereſt therein. "I believe that GOD is; that he liveth omnipreſent and eternal; that his power is boundleſs; that he is holy, juſt, and good; and my joy it is, that he is what he is, though I have ſinned againſt him, and have deſerved his indignation. Now I can look upon him with delight in all his perfectneſs, and becauſe he is all-perfect; in his perfection lies all my ſafety and all my happineſs." In ſhort, though a real belief that GOD (apprehended according to the truth of his Being) namely, juſt and righteous, is, fills the awakened ſoul with fear, yet, when the belief of GOD's mercy in JESUS CHRIST is added

added thereunto, it fills the believing soul with comfort. And therefore,

2. In this article, "I believe in GOD," is implied a belief of the gospel, that GOD is reconciled in JESUS CHRIST. And this is what makes the belief of GOD an article of christian faith. Without a Mediator there is a great impassable gulph between a holy governor of the world and a rebellious creature. GOD stands off on one side, and man dares not draw near on the other. But when JESUS comes in between, the breach is healed, the intercourse is opened; GOD offers himself to the sinner, and he, encouraged by the promise, and laying hold on the righteousness of CHRIST, says unto the Lord, *Thou art my God.* Whatever belief any one may have of GOD, that he is every thing glorious, excellent, and desirable, yet, considering him absolutely, he not only may not, but even he dares not, come near him with confidence; sin, guilt, and the curse of the law forbid. It is to a covenant-God only that there is access; it is through CHRIST only that we come unto the Father. If any presume to come otherwise, they have no command or other warrant to bear them out; they come in ignorant and arrogant security, not sensible that they are sinful, guilty, and miserable creatures; and let them not think (whatever their confidence be) that they are accepted with GOD. Indeed, unless inexpressibly deluded, they can have no confidence in GOD. His terrors will make them afraid, because they have that within them which tells them they are sinners, and is continually crying out, How canst thou stand before this holy Lord GOD? But not to insist on this, the article before us is

Christian,

Christian, ſtands at the head of all the articles of our moſt holy faith, is the key unto and the ſubſtance of them all; and therefore muſt needs have reference unto CHRIST, as that only Saviour by and through whom we believe in GOD.

3. "I believe in GOD" not only implies our believing that GOD is what he is; and again, our believing that he is reconciled in CHRIST, but alſo our accepting him as he preſents himſelf to us in CHRIST to be a GOD unto us. Now this acceptance contains two things, (1.) A taking of GOD to ſave and bleſs us according to the goſpel. To ſave us, in CHRIST, from all our enemies; the curſe of the law; the power of ſin, the world, and the devil; the power of death, and the power of hell. And to bleſs us in the ſame JESUS CHRIST, by being at perfect peace with us; taking us to be his children; granting us his favour; comforting us in all our troubles; making us grow in grace; keeping us in death; receiving our departing ſouls; raiſing our mortal bodies; and cauſing us everlaſtingly to behold his face in the world to come. This is an act of faith, the betruſting the ſoul unto GOD the Saviour, upon a belief of his all-ſufficiency, and of his ſure mercy in JESUS CHRIST. And herein we do evidently renounce any pretence of righteouſneſs in ourſelves, as well as all hope of happineſs in the creature, laying up all our hope and happineſs in a covenant-God. (2.) A taking of GOD to rule over us according to the goſpel; that is, to rule over us according to his revealed will by the power of his ſpirit, wherein we renounce our own wiſdom, ſubmitting to his word; our own ſtrength, ſubjecting

ourſelves

ourſelves to the guidance of his grace; and our own will, yielding ourſelves up intirely unto his. This is the ſurrender of ourſelves unto GOD to be a Lord and maſter unto us. And in theſe two things lie our acceptance of GOD to be our GOD according to the offer that he makes of himſelf in JESUS CHRIST. In ſhort, to believe in GOD, is to believe that he is what he is, that is, what he hath revealed himſelf to be; to believe that, having reconciled the world unto himſelf by JESUS CHRIST, he offers himſelf to be a GOD unto us; and to declare our acceptance of this offer by betruſting our ſouls unto him, and ſurrendering up our whole ſelves to his ſervice.

From the whole it appears, that when any one ſays "I believe in GOD," according to the true deſign and meaning of the article, his intention is to declare, "I believe there is one GOD, though ſubſiſting in three perſons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt; who, I ſtedfaſtly am aſſured, is a moſt glorious ſpirit; that liveth of himſelf alone, being the life of all creatures; neither limited by place or time, but infinitely filling all things, and ſubſiſting from everlaſting to everlaſting; his power without bounds, and his bleſſedneſs incapable of addition or diminution; the governor of the world, and in every reſpect qualified to be ſo, being unſpottedly upright in all his commandments, juſt and equal in all his diſpenſations, and good in all his dealings; unchangeable, becauſe incapable of miſtake, as infinitely wiſe to order all things, and who cannot fail for ever in his nature or will. I do confeſs that I have moſt ſinfully departed from the government of this my righttul King, and that for the ſame I am de-

ſerving

ſerving he ſhould never look upon me; but ſeeing he has ſent his only begotten Son into the world to ſave ſinners, and has commanded me to believe in his name, I do ſolemnly declare, that I have no hope towards GOD but through JESUS CHRIST, in whom, and for whoſe ſake I deſire always to believe GOD is reconciled to me to the alone glory of grace. I publiſh this as the ſole ground of my confidence towards GOD, and would have you all take notice, that I do moſt cordially join with you in our common and profeſſed faith towards GOD through JESUS CHRIST our Lord only; in whom, I do hereby ſolemnly declare, that I have taken, and do take GOD, according to his moſt condeſcending offer, to be my GOD, to pardon and accept, to ſanctify, defend, and keep me to his uſe while I live, and to glorify me after this life, and this without any known reſervation, and in a willing renunciation of all idols. In the full force and meaning of all which things I now ſay in the preſence of you all, and call upon you all to bear witneſs to this my declaration, *I believe in God.*"

And now, brethren, I may aſk, Have you underſtood theſe things? If you have, I muſt ſay unto you, happy are you, if you do them. For it was juſt now ſaid, that this firſt article is the ſubſtance of all the Creed; ſo that if you truly ſay, "I believe in GOD," then GOD is your GOD, you have GOD the Father for your Father, GOD the Son for your Redeemer, and GOD the Holy Ghoſt for your Comforter. And if GOD be your GOD, then of courſe all things are yours; life, death, things preſent, and things to come are yours; you are a true member of CHRIST's body

the Church, are in the communion of Saints, your sins are forgiven you, and the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting wait for you. In a word, the grace of our Lord JESUS CHRIST, the love of GOD, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, are actually and always with you. And is all this nothing? Be sensible, I beseech you, of the noble honour and high privilege you are exalted to. Consider from whence you were taken, what you were, and whither you were going; be attentive to the now happy difference. How did you once think of GOD, with what hatred! with what terror! and now to behold the blessed object of your heart smiling upon you, O what a difference! What a forlorn creature once were you, uncomfortable amidst all the comforts of life, and O how uncomfortable in the day of your affliction! But now, what a refuge you have in GOD under all your troubles, what a calm within in the most tempestuous seasons, what a peace passing all understanding in all your tribulations, while you look up and see it is your loving father, your eternal guide, your almighty friend, that appoints and orders every affliction; while you look up and see his countenance bespeaking all love, while you look up and hear him say, *It is I, be not afraid!* Happy, happy difference! How you once trembled at death; were filled with horror in the prospect of judgment, and looked upon heaven without hope! "Alas, you said in the anguish of your heart, heaven is not my home, I have no part in the blessed inheritance of the saints; hell, hell, I fear, is my portion; I shall be cast into the bottomless pit, and howl through the ages of eternity from amidst the fire that

that ſhall never be quenched. But now GOD is my GOD; JESUS died for me; JESUS has interceded and prevailed; the eternal, almighty, living GOD permits me to call him father; he hath taken me among his children; he hath given me the ſpirit of a child, and I love him; I call him my father, and he anſwers me; I caſt all my care upon him, and he careth for me; he doth not, he will not leave nor forſake me, he is mine for ever and ever; I ſhall ſee his face; ſhall live at his right hand; I ſhall come with ſinging, and everlaſting joy ſhall be upon my head. How is the bitterneſs of death paſſed! What is become of the King of terrors? How is his viſage changed! Bleſſed meſſenger of heaven to bring me home to my GOD! Where is thy ſting? And how are the wonted horrors of the judgment-day vaniſhed! I ſhall meet my Lord in the air, I ſhall be for ever with my GOD." There were no end of diſplaying the difference there now is between the ſtate of him who is alive from the dead, in compariſon of what he was in the days of his unbelief.

And what, will none of theſe things move the unbeliever? That unhappy ſoul, who lies before GOD as often as he ſays *I believe in God*, neither believing that GOD is what he is, nor believing in JESUS CHRIST as the only Mediator between GOD and man, nor accepting GOD to be his GOD; but, notwithſtanding all theſe outward profeſſions of believing in GOD, yielding himſelf daily to ſin, and refuſing GOD and his ſervice? Will none of theſe things move him? My dear brother, what the believer once was, all that you ſtill are, unpardoned, unholy, unhappy, hopeleſs,

trembling at death.—What, do not you tremble at death? No; What, do you defy death? Do you say to him, "Come on, here am I, ready to meet thee; come now, come this night, while I sleep, this night come and take me?" What, can you say so? Alas, I know you do not like to hear of that ugly word, *death*. The very word makes you uneasy. You would be glad I should mention it no more. Death, death, death and damnation; you have been often angry with me in your hearts for using such terrifying words. What, will the man never have done? Must we never hear of any thing else but hell and damnation? You have been angry with me for this, you know you have. And why so? Was it because I did any thing amiss, any thing contrary to duty or contrary to charity, in telling you of these things? or was it not solely because you were made uneasy by the hearing them? Ah, there lies the truth of the matter. Had you thought your state good, you had not been a jot displeased with my utmost freedom; but your conscience was against you; and so it is now; it is pressing home upon you this moment, and forcing you to say, "I know I am in that very state he has been just describing the believer to have been formerly in. He has been speaking the plain truth of my case; as he says, I am neither easy, nor happy. It is true enough, I am dreadfully afraid of death, and horribly afraid of judgment; and if he had said farther, that I wish I were in the condition of that believer he has been speaking of, he would not have said a word more than is true; for I should think myself the happiest man in the world to be in the state that he is. But then he does not know what trials,

and troubles, and difficulties are in my way. I would do something, but how can I? Were he in my place, he would speak another language." Why, my dear friend, bear witness for me, did I ever say, either you, I or any one, could go to heaven without difficulties and troubles? And yet I would needs have you go thither; I would not have the severest trials, the most formidable difficulties to hinder you, because I am sure heaven would make you amends for all. In short, all that I have said is but what you knew if I had never said it, and which you knew to be so true, that you would have counted me a liar if I had said otherwise; for the sum of all that I have said is, that if you do not believe and leave your sins you cannot be saved. Here lies the plain truth, and I earnestly pray GOD to stir you up to the consideration and practice of it. For, O! how happy should I be to see you All in heaven! Believe me, I do not give one of you over. And I must and will beseech you, every soul, to lay hold on everlasting life, while I have yet the power of begging any favour of you. Return, return, my dear brethren, why will ye die? Ah! cease not, give not yourselves rest day nor night until you can truly say, *I believe in God.*

SERMON IX.

ACTS xvi. 30, 31.

What must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.

AFTER having shewn you the nature of divine faith, I proceeded to set before you the object thereof, to wit, GOD in CHRIST, as expressed in the first words of the Creed, *I believe in God.* We must now go on to explain more at large, what is included in these introductory words. And this is the doctrine of the Three persons in the divine nature, distinguished by the relation they bear to each other, and by their respective offices towards us, together with the happy effects on our parts resulting from our true belief in this Trinity.

Though there is but one GOD, yet the scripture teaches us to own three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, subsisting inconceivably together in the divine nature; as is sufficiently manifest by the form of baptism, and by the apostolical benediction, as well as by a large variety of scriptures which declare this great mystery with incontestable plainness to the humble and unprejudiced mind. Wherefore we are taught by our church to 'worship one GOD in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity, neither confounding the persons, nor dividing the substance.' Whereby is understood, that GOD is the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and again,

again, that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, are one GOD. Concerning which it is needful to obſerve, that there is both an union, and a diſtinction in the Godhead. The union is, that the three perſons are one in nature, one in the ſame undivided Godhead; that is, 'though the Father be GOD, the Son GOD, and the Holy Ghoſt GOD, yet they are not three diſtinct gods,' neither have they three different or ſeparate parts of the Godhead, but one with another and one in another they are one and the ſame GOD. Nevertheleſs, although not ſeparated and divided, yet are they diſtinguiſhed; the Father is not the Son nor the Holy Ghoſt, neither is the Son the Father or the Holy Ghoſt, nor the Holy Ghoſt the Father or the Son. They ſubſiſt diſtinctly, though undividedly in the ſame Godhead, 'the whole three perſons coeternal 'together and coequal.'

In ſpeaking of the three perſons in the divine nature, we are to conſider the relation they bear to each other, and their reſpective offices towards us.

The firſt perſon in the Godhead is *the Father.*

Now Father being a relative term hath reference to a Son, without which there could not be a Father. The property of the firſt perſon, conſidered as ſubſiſting in the Godhead, is to beget, to wit, the ſecond perſon, who is therefore called the Son. When you read in ſcripture of the Father's begetting the Son; you muſt not conceive thereof as you do of one creature's begetting another, for there is an utter difference. Creatures beget their offſpring in time, the Father the Son from eternity. The Father begets the Son by communicating to him his whole eſſence; which

cannot be done by creatures, becauſe ſo they would be themſelves reduced to nothing. When the Father begets the Son, that Son is not a Being ſeparate from the Father, as is the caſe in all other generation, but they ſubſiſt together in the ſame undivided eſſence.

Thus you ſee what relation the firſt perſon bears to the ſecond, and for what reaſon he is moſt eminently intitled the *Father*. But becauſe of this relation he bears to the Son, who hath aſſumed our nature that he might redeem us, the Father alſo is the Father of thoſe who believe in the name of his only-begotten Son. For although GOD be in one ſenſe the Father of us all, inaſmuch as we are made by him, yet that peculiar intereſt in him which is implied in the title, *Father*, we forfeited by ſin, and it is only reſtored to us by grace, ſo that he is the Father of thoſe only who believe. And to all theſe he is a Father, *for as many as received him* (Chriſt) *to them gave he power to become the Sons of God.*

The meaning of the words therefore is, 'I believe in GOD the Father of our Lord JESUS CHRIST, as my Father in him.' Wherein theſe ſeveral things are implied.

Firſt, And principally, A profeſſion of Faith. I believe that GOD the Father is a Father in CHRIST JESUS to all them that believe, and my Father in particular. The Creed is our confeſſion of the aſſured and ſtedfaſt belief we have of the truth of the goſpel, that is, of GOD as he has manifeſted himſelf in mercy unto us by JESUS CHRIST. Conſequently to ſay, I believe in the Father, is to ſay, I believe that he is reconciled, no longer a conſuming GOD, but an affectionate parent

parent unto his church, in and for the sake of his dear Son. Now do we believe this? Are we fully and unquestionably persuaded, that *when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son made of a woman, that we might receive the adoption of Sons?* That notwithstanding our guilt, and the curse of the law, yet coming humbly to GOD, and pleading the merits of JESUS CHRIST, GOD actually receives us? As far as we fail here, it is manifest we come short of a full belief of the sufficiency of the gospel-method of salvation. But as far as we are stedfast herein, that GOD is the Father of all them that believe, we shall also believe that he is our Father too in particular, confessing our sins, and coming to him by JESUS CHRIST. It is true, if we do not confess our sins, and come to GOD in his own way, he is no Father to us. But then it is not less certain, that if we do confess our sins, and humbly sue for his mercy in CHRIST, he is actually our Father; and if so doing we yet do not believe him to be our Father, the real reason of it is, that we do not stedfastly, as we ought, believe the reconciliation that is in CHRIST JESUS, and that, for his sake, GOD is a Father to the Lord's people. It is an artifice, I suppose, of the devil, to get a charge of presumption to be laid upon any that shall think GOD to be reconciled to them, and their Father. And what makes me the rather suspect his hand to be in it is, that this false notion, covered over with a shew of humility, does secretly strike at the sufficiency of gospel-salvation, the truth of GOD's promises, the comfort and growth of GOD's people. The faith of GOD's church is, "I acknowledge GOD to be the

Father of all them that believe." And shall it then be said, it is presumption for any man to apply this personally and particularly to himself? Should any one say, I do indeed believe that GOD is a Father to his church, but I am a vile unworthy sinner, how can he be *my* Father? let such an one know, that he does not stedfastly, as he imagines he does, believe, that GOD in CHRIST is reconciled and a Father to his church; and that in reality his want of a particular faith respecting himself is owing to a defect in his general faith concerning the church. I do not say, that GOD is not a father to such, because I am told the contrary; none that come are cast out, though they come trembling. Have they but so much faith as engages them to come, they are received. But then this does not afford a proof that there is no sin in such misbelief, and doubting suspicion of the gospel declarations. It is very dishonourable to GOD's mercy, truth, wisdom and justice set forth to our faith in the gospel. And every one that confesses with his mouth, "I believe in GOD the Father," ought at the same time to be able to say in his heart, I believe he is actually the father of all that believe, and, seeing this is the faith which I therefore confess because I rest my own soul upon it, I believe him to be *my* father also. Let us not seek excuses for the great sin of unbelief, but confessing our sins, let us pray that we may stedfastly believe GOD's promises, that he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and is a father unto us for his Son JESUS CHRIST's sake, to the glory of his grace, and to the comfort and establishment of our souls.

Secondly,

Secondly, "I believe in the Father," implies a child-like confidence. I look upon GOD as a Father, and as such I have confidence in him. *Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but ye have received the spirit of Adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.* The spirit under the law was ministred according to the peculiar design of that dispensation, which was to be a schoolmaster to bring us to CHRIST. And what there was in that dispensation suited to beget bondage and fear, the apostle tells us, when he says, *Ye are not*, now under the christian dispensation, *come unto the mount that might not be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words, which voice they that heard, intreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more; (for they could not endure that which was commanded) and if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart. And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake.* Now, says he, out of this dispensation ye are passed, ye have not received *again* the spirit of bondage to fear. Under the gospel all breathes love, and suitably therewith the spirit is ministered as a spirit of adoption, whereby with the confidence of children we call GOD father. Confidence in GOD becomes this last and fullest publication of the gospel by the Son of GOD in person. Hereof the believer speaking in the Creed is supposed to be sensible, and to profess his belief, that GOD is his father with the confidence of a child. Be sensible then of your privilege, ye that believe in the name of the Lord JESUS CHRIST; cast

away your fears that are dishonourable to a GOD that *spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all*; strive earnestly for the spirit of children, that, in a manner becoming the gospel of his Son, ye may *serve God without fear*. Hear what he says, *Come out from among them, and be ye separate:* now this call you have complied with, as many as are joined to the Lord. Then it follows, speaking to you, *I will receive you, and will be a father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.* We disgrace the free and rich love of GOD, and the infinite merit of the Redeemer's righteousness and blood, as far as we come short of walking with GOD in the humble confidence of children. Let the believer therefore remember, that he is *no more a servant, but a son*, and pray for that spirit of faith which shall enable him to say, "I believe in GOD *the Father*" with that joyful confidence which the glorious gospel of JESUS CHRIST not only warrants but requires, and which the person here confessing his faith in GOD is supposed to be possessed of.

Thirdly, "I believe in the Father," implies a childlike disposition towards GOD. I own GOD to be my father, and I profess myself to be his son, ready to pay him all dutiful and childlike obedience. It is the sure proof of our relation to GOD as a father, that we have the spirit of children wrought in us; a spirit of love and of a ready mind to do the will of GOD. They that are GOD's children have some measure of the spirit of JESUS their elder brother, whose *meat and drink it was to do the will of him that sent him*, without murmuring at any of his orders, or thinking his

his commandments grievous. The grief of a true child of GOD is that he ſhould ſin againſt him, and thereby diſhonour and diſpleaſe him; his greateſt lamentation is over that body of ſin which lurks in his members, and ſuffers him not to be that dutiful child he would be. 'I believe GOD to be my father,' he ſays, 'and I regard myſelf as his child, chearfully to ſubject myſelf unto his holy will in all things. *O how love I thy law! all the day long is my ſtudy in it.* Take notice all ye that hear me, while I ſay theſe words, *I believe in God the Father*, I think myſelf obliged by every tie of duty and gratitude, and I am fully and gladly determined to keep the commandments of my GOD.' And if we cannot ſay this in the ſincerity of our hearts; if GOD's commandments are hated or deſpiſed by us, and we will not walk in them; where is there even the ſpirit of a *ſervant?* But ſhould we endeavour to keep them while it is merely through fear of puniſhment, and are only reſtrained from ſin leſt it ſhould bring us to ruin, and forced upon duties becauſe otherwiſe we cannot be eaſy, where is the ſpirit of *children?* It is plain that the moſt of thoſe who call themſelves Chriſtians, are living in a flat contrariety to the temper and conduct of one truly believing in GOD as a father; and it is not leſs manifeſt, that there are many of thoſe that may well enough be termed ſerious people, who, through want of deep humbleneſs of mind, and from a degree of ignorance reſpecting the freedom of goſpel-ſalvation, and the privileges that belong to it, are ſerving GOD more like ſlaves than children. It is in an increaſing knowledge of GOD's free love to us in

JESUS CHRIST, and in a growing confidence in him as our father, that we become followers of GOD as dear and obedient children, not fashioning ourselves according to the former lusts in our ignorance, but ready to every good word and work.

Lastly, To believe in GOD as a father, implies a readiness to submit to all his disposals of and dispensations towards us. This is indisputable. Is GOD my father? then he loves me. And is my father infinitely wise? then he cannot mistake in his management of me. Therefore I say, let him have the whole direction of me; else I should not truly believe in him as my father. Let him provide for me as he sees best, and whether the provision he allots me be more or less, it is the portion he gives me, and I will be content. If he takes from it, I will not complain, because I know him to be a loving father. If he corrects me, shall I murmur against him? This were to suspect his fatherly love. Foolishness I know is bound in my heart, and the rod of correction must drive it far from me. When I call GOD my father, I declare an implicit and reverent submission to all his disposals. In all our possessions, and in all our afflictions, to sanctify the Lord GOD in our hearts, is an eminent branch of believing in GOD as our father. If we are dissatisfied with his allotment of the things of the world unto us, if we murmur under his corrections, how can we believe him to have the bowels of a father, how do we treat him in correspondence with what we profess? Really to believe in GOD as our father, you see goes into the dispensations and troubles, as well as the duties of every day. *Father, if it be possible,*

ſible, let this cup paſs away from me; nevertheleſs not my will but thine be done. Behold *there* the true ſpirit of a child.

By this time you may ſee ſomething of the true ſenſe and meaning of this word, *I believe in God the Father*, and that whoever ſays it according to the full intention thereof as a point of chriſtian faith, doth thereby declare, 'I believe that the father is in a peculiar ſenſe ſo *intitled* as bearing the relation of a father to his only-begotten Son, but I believe alſo that in and for the ſake of that only-begotten Son manifeſt in the fleſh, he is a father to all thoſe among the fallen race of mankind, who believe in the name of his Son JESUS CHRIST. As one of that happy number I glory in him as my father, and with the whole church do profeſs my humble but aſſured confidence in him in the delightful character of their and my father. As ſuch I deſire and determine to honour and reverence him, delighting to do his will whatever it be, and in all things to ſubmit to his fatherly guidance, without hypocriſy, partiality, diſputing, or complaining; in every thing willing to approve myſelf the child of this my heavenly father to his glory, and to my peace and happineſs.'

And now what ſay we, Do we thus believe in GOD the Father? No; the moſt are not thus related to him. Their conſciences and their lives proclaim they are not. What, do they believe GOD to be *their* father; and do they rejoice in him as *their* GOD? Should they fancy they do theſe things, yet do they walk with him as dear children, and ſubmit to his providential diſpoſals with a childlike quietneſs and thankfulneſs? Here

Here at leaſt they ſee themſelves wanting; they are ſelf-willed, diſobedient, impatient and diſſatisfied. They live according to their own humour, and will, as far as they can, have every thing after their own mind. Their whole pretenſions to faith amount only to this, to *ſay* they believe in GOD the father, to *call* themſelves his ſervants, to come into his houſe, and to ſtand up and repeat the Creed without any deſign or meaning; if theſe things will ſerve the turn they are believers as good as the beſt. But if you expect any thing elſe from them, if you will have them humble themſelves for their apoſtate nature, and their ſinful practices, come to GOD by JESUS CHRIST in earneſt and importunate prayer for mercy, beſeeching him, as for their lives, that he will take them into his favour and be a father unto them; if you expect they ſhould eſteem it their greateſt happineſs to have GOD for their father, and that they diligently ſeek to obtain a warrantable perſuaſion that he is ſo; if you look that they manifeſt their relation to GOD by all kinds of good works, and by behaving in ſuch manner as to glorify GOD; if you are expecting any thing of this from them, they will be excuſed from a faith ſo troubleſome and ſelf-denying. And what can we ſay to ſuch? If they will not be perſuaded to ſuch a faith, what can we do? If they will refuſe the glorious liberty of being GOD's children, what beſides can we offer them? If they will neither be influenced by the dignity and honour of ſuch a relation, nor have regard to the noble privileges that attend it in having the eternal GOD to hear all their prayers, to pity all their infirmities, to ſupply all their wants, to ſupport and comfort them in life, death

death and glory, what more can we do but be ſorry and pray for them? Unhappy creatures! They let paſs the golden opportunity that can never be recovered; they ſuffer the day of ſalvation to ſet upon them, that never, never ſhall riſe again! O how will they wiſh in a very little time, when it is too late, that GOD was their father! when the day of judgment appears in its awful terrors, how will they then wiſh that GOD was their father!

But a word to others. You do not think I have carried the matter too far, by ſtating ſo high as I have done believing in GOD the Father. The truth is, your duty and happineſs go together; and I wiſh rather to bring you up to your duty, than to lower that to your ſtandard. Should I have ſaid leſs than I have, it would have been doing you a ſenſible injury; for did you thus believe in GOD, would you not be more happy and more holy? And I leave you to judge whether I have advanced any thing, which the promiſes of GOD will not authorize and the duty of believing demand.

I take my leave of the whole with one word to thoſe whoſe eyes are now opening upon ſpiritual things, and ſee themſelves encompaſſed for the preſent with a variety of difficulty. To ſuch I ſay, how delightful and encouraging is the proſpect before you in the adoption of children! How would ye rejoice, my dear friends, could ye ſay, "GOD is our father; he is ours, and we are his! The almighty living GOD is mine; he that liveth for evermore is mine. Mine to love me, bleſs me, comfort me, keep me, glorify me! he is my father, even mine!" Would not this

make

make you happy? And see the only-begotten stands in your nature with opened arms to receive and introduce you to *his father and your father, to his God and your God.* O how sure will your title then be to the adoption of a child! See, the word, even that word which will not pass away when heaven and earth are gone, is before you to teach and direct you. See, the spirit is come knocking at the door of your heart, and soliciting an entrance, that he may bring you to JESUS, and to GOD in him. How forcibly he pleads! how he says in your heart, behold here through thy life all this sin, and before thee all that damnation, why wilt thou die? Behold JESUS died for the ungodly; hear how he says, *Come to me and I will give thee rest*; behold the Father looks toward thee, it is a look of love, hearken to his gracious voice; "Come out, and I will be a father unto thee, and thou shalt be my child." What encouragement! But is this all? Let all the triumphs of the dying hour speak, let all the glories of the judgment-day declare, let all the joys of the everlasting heavens publish, if you be not called to a blessing indeed when GOD invites you to him to become his child. Take courage. Let not Satan terrify, nor man dismay, nor interest insnare, nor pleasure beguile you of GOD your reward. Keep your eye fixed on the glorious GOD. How glorious he is! How does his favour make the angels happy! How happy will you be, when you can say, *I believe in God the Father!*

SERMON X.

ACTS xvi. 30, 31.

What must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.

"I Believe in GOD the Father" having been considered, we now pass on to the next word in this first article of our Creed, *Almighty*.

The almightiness of GOD has reference to his *authority* and *dominion* over all things, and also to his *all-sufficiency* and *might* to do whatever he pleases. In the latter sense it is to be more distinctly spoken to in the sixth article, where the same word returns, "he sitteth on the right hand of GOD the Father Almighty." Here it is to be understood in the former sense, as expressive of GOD's absolute dominion and authority over all things; to which he has an unquestionable right as being maker of all things, and for which he is fully qualified as being endued with a most upright will to order his subjects aright, and with power, knowledge, and the inspection of his own eye to uphold, restrain, and correct them.

I mean not to take up your time in proving what no one, who believes there is a GOD, denies. The very devils know and believe GOD to be the governor of the world. When we say, "I believe in GOD the Father Almighty," we own the same truth also, but we own it aright, in a spirit different from them, in a sincere disposition of heart to be subject to his

govern-

government. This is what makes the article Christian, and gives it a place in our Creed. We own the Father to be Almighty in a cheerful confession of his rightful dominion over us, and in a willing determination that he shall rule over us. We speak it as they who are returned from their rebellion, into which all are fallen by the sin of *Adam*, and as brought back unto the Father through the mediation and by the grace of JESUS CHRIST his only Son our Saviour.

The dominion over all things is here ascribed unto the Father, while in other scriptures you will find it referred unto the Son. The reason of which is, that although Lordship over all things be in the Son by constitution, and as receiving it from the Father for the special work of mediation, yet the right rests in the Father, who made all things for himself. And therefore that dominion, which as to the execution of the Father's will is actually and fully in the Son, is nevertheless ultimately in the Father, and therefore here ascribed to him.

The dominion of the Father is an absolute sovereignty over all creatures, with whom he does therefore according to his own pleasure, and, without giving account of any of his matters, command, forbid, and dispose of them in all cases. And therefore his dominion implies,

First, His absolute and everlasting empire, whereby he is *King of Kings and Lord of Lords, sitteth over all from the beginning, and remaineth a King for ever.*

Secondly, And in consequence of this absolute empire, a right of giving laws to his subjects as he pleases, which are to be regarded as the sole rule of their conduct.

duct. So what we call virtue and vice, good and evil, do not at all consist in acting up to the supposed obligation arising from the fitness or unfitness of things according to our estimation of them, but in obedience or disobedience to the supreme will of GOD. To obey GOD is virtue, and to disobey him is vice. To do or forbear therefore, because the thing to be done seems fit, or because that which is to be forborne seems otherwise, exclusively of a due regard had to GOD's authority, however right it may be in itself thus to do or forbear, is no act of religion. There is no doubt that all GOD's commands are in themselves most right and fit, being constituted upon an infinitely wise plan, devised by GOD himself; but then to do them solely because they are so, not because he commands them, is plainly to lay aside his authority. Yet upon that GOD insists. He will be obeyed absolutely. He does not subject his laws to our examination in such manner, that we shall only do them, because we see them right. He expects to be obeyed, because he is GOD and King. Laying aside this measure of obedience, we subject ourselves to endless dispute and uncertainty, and, in fact, cast away that which can alone influence the conscience. GOD's will is the law of his subjects; while they have regard to that as the ground of their obligation to do and forbear, they obey; when they depart from it, setting up another measure, and searching into the reasonableness of the command to found their obligation thereupon, they assuredly fall into sin. See all this in an instance or two. GOD said to *Adam*, *Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat; for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely*

surely die. Here was a plain command of GOD, resting simply upon his authority, without the least intimation of a reason why the fruit of this tree was forbidden to be eat. It was the test of *Adam*'s obedience to GOD's supreme will. Now what step does Satan take to effect his purpose? He artfully draws away the woman's attention from the obligation arising out of GOD's authority, by leading her into an inquiry after the design and fitness of the prohibition. The ground of obedience being thus forgotten, he easily reasons her into a persuasion, that it would be far better for her to eat it than forbear. Just so you may find it to have been with yourself. While, with never so good a design, you have been reasoning about the excellency of any of GOD's laws, in order to stir yourself up to conformity therewith, and have not laid as your foundation the command and authority of GOD, which alone has power to bind and influence the conscience, you have found that there was neither weight nor power from all your discoveries to constrain your mind, and however you might judge such a conduct fit, you had no ability to practise it. It is the sense of GOD's sovereign authority which in fact influences to all duties. In the sight of this we can fear because we have done what was forbidden, or take confidence in GOD through JESUS CHRIST, because we are doing what is commanded. But should you, without respect to GOD's authority, set yourself, from the unreasonableness of sin, or the reasonableness of believing, to the practice of godly fear, and exercising faith, you would certainly find yourself both unhumbled and unbelieving; which I doubt not is a common

mon case. Take another instance. God bids *Abraham* sacrifice *Isaac*. Had the father of the faithful gone to any other fitness than the fitness of an immediate, absolute, unquestioning obedience to the command of God, he had certainly been overset, and come short of that conduct which was so eminently pleasing to him. But one and another may be ready to say, What can we think of such a command? Could it be right or fit for a father to sacrifice his son? Is it not contrary to all the notions we have of duty? If the obligations of duty be the fitness of things, according to our judgment of them, it is. But if these obligations arise from the mere authority of God, it is just the contrary, and *Abraham* would certainly have sinned, had he with-holden his only son from God. And therefore this instance, with some others in scripture, stands eminently forth in proof, that it is the authority and command of God which is our only rule of judging any thing to be good or evil, and which alone begets obligation of duty. If therefore you shall at any time hear cavils raised against this case of *Abraham* or others, be upon your guard, and be sensible, that they who dispute in this manner, are acting over again the conduct of Satan when he tempted *Eve*, by endeavouring to take you off from the obligations of duty, as simply arising from the will and command of God, and to bring you to such subtle inquiries into the fitness and unfitness of God's commands, as tend to cast his sovereign authority out of your mind, to make you lose all sense of his dominion, to leave you in all uncertainty and doubt, effectually to weaken all the bands of conscience, and

ſet you at liberty to do as you liſt, as your corrupted inclinations diſpoſe you.

Thirdly, It belongs to GOD's ſovereignty to reſtrain from diſobedience by puniſhment, and to encourage unto ſubmiſſion by promiſes. The former of theſe was expreſſed, and the latter implied in the covenant made with *Adam*, when GOD ſaid, *In the day that thou eateſt thereof thou ſhalt ſurely die.* To aſcertain the meaſure of theſe is the prerogative of GOD, who unqueſtionably has a right to encourage obedience by rewards infinitely ſurpaſſing any excellence there is therein, and who cannot be ſuſpected of puniſhing ſin beyond its deſert. You muſt take heed reſpecting the one and the other, to have your eye on the ſovereignty of GOD, both that you may not queſtion the title he has given you to glory, becauſe of the vaſt diſproportion there is between it and your worthleſs ſervices, if you are in a ſtate of obedience; and alſo may not diſpute the equitableneſs of his declared puniſhments againſt you, if you are diſobedient, and ſo ſcreening yourſelf under the vain hope that he will not puniſh you at all, remain a rebel. There is indeed no proportion between the ſervice we pay GOD, and the reward prepared for us: but there is doubtleſs an exact proportion between ſin, and the puniſhment threatened againſt it. If you cannot deny that the great ſovereign of the univerſe may diſpenſe the reward becauſe it is great, ſo do not ſet about to perſuade yourſelf he will not inflict the puniſhment becauſe it is terrible. Beware again here alſo of making your judgment of what is fit and right, the meaſure of GOD's ſanctions, leſt, as in the former caſe, you would be reaſoned

out

out of all religion, so in this latter you should reason yourself into hell. God knows better than you what sin deserves. Debate not against his determinations. As the august Governor of the world he hath decreed, that the *wicked shall go away into hell, and all the people that forget God.* And can you stop his hand? Will you say to him, What dost thou? When you are perished for ever, will you be able to contend, thou art unrighteous in this which thou hast brought upon me? Let God have his place, and know you yours, which is to obey; but if you will not, to suffer that punishment which he, as your rightful and almighty Sovereign, hath decreed against you. Strange that any should contend against the truth of an eternity of torment, when fallen angels are reserved to it; not annihilated, (which is the sinner's greatest hope hereafter) but reserved unto the judgment of the great day, to be cast into that fire of divine everlasting wrath which is prepared for them. And if eternal torments are certain, can they be unjust? Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? Yes, my brethren, the Lord will be God, he will govern the world, let the sinners of hell or earth contend as they please; he will make the one and other know that he judgeth righteously. Lay it to heart, you unwise. You are subject to God's dominion, you know you are. You are rebelling against him; you dare not say the contrary. And will he yield up his government? Shall not he punish? *Behold, he cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity.* O how will you be able to abide the day of his coming? The Lord have mercy upon us, and bring us all to repentance,

pentance, that we experience not what the power and duration of his wrath ſhall be. But,

Fourthly, GOD's dominion alſo takes in his providence. He is not an indolent and unconcerned, but an obſervant and active governor. He ordereth all things. Hear what the ſcripture ſaith of the kingdom of providence; 'the counſel of the Lord ſhall ſtand, and he will do all his pleaſure.' See this in his government of the inanimate world. 'He commandeth the ſun, and it riſeth not, and he ſealeth up all the ſtars. GOD thundreth marvellouſly with his voice, he directeth his lightnings unto the ends of the earth. He cauſeth the vapours to aſcend, he bringeth forth the winds out of his treaſures. He ſaith to the ſnow, Be thou on the earth. Fire and hail, ſnow and vapour, wind and ſtorm, fulfil his word: he turneth them round about with his counſel, that they may do whatſoever he commandeth them: he cauſeth them to come, whether for correction or mercy. The Lord giveth rain, the former and latter in his ſeaſon, that men may gather in their corn, their wine and their oil: he ſhutteth up the heavens, that there be no rain, and that the land yield not her fruit. He turneth a fruitful land into barrenneſs, for the wickedneſs of them that dwell therein.' Well, all this GOD doth. How ſay then the wiſe men of the world, that there is no ſuch thing as a particular providence, ſearching into ſecond cauſes for the ſprings of all things. But ſee it alſo in the animal world. 'Things creeping innumerable, both ſmall and great beaſts, wait upon him, and he giveth them their meat in due ſeaſon: he giveth it them, and they gather it: he openeth his hand, and they are filled with good: he hideth his face and

and they are troubled; when he taketh away their breath, they die and return to their duſt. He feedeth the fowls of the air, and not a ſparrow falleth to the ground without him.' What, is there all this too, and yet no ſuch thing as a particular Providence! But ſee it in the government of kingdoms. 'The moſt High ruleth in the kingdoms of men, and giveth it to whomſoever he will. The Lord increaſeth the nations, and deſtroyeth them: he enlargeth the nations, and ſtraitneth them again, and at what inſtant he ſpeaketh concerning a nation or a kingdom, to build and to plant it, or to pluck up, and pull down and to deſtroy it, it ſhall be done.' See it alſo in particular perſons. 'From him cometh every good and perfect gift, neither is there any evil in the world, and the Lord hath not done it. He killeth, and he maketh alive. He numbereth the hairs of our head. Unto GOD the Lord belong the iſſues from death: if he gather unto himſelf the ſpirit of man, and his breath, all fleſh ſhall periſh together, and man ſhall turn again unto duſt. The preparations of the heart in man, and the anſwer of the tongue, is from the Lord. He hideth from the wiſe and prudent, what he revealeth unto babes. He maketh poor, and maketh rich: he bringeth low, and lifteth up. Riches and honour come of him. He maketh the barren woman to be a joyful mother of children. In his hand our breath is, and his are all our ways.'—Thus you ſee how in the kingdom of providence, all things are under GOD's direction. He ruleth over all, and guideth all things as he pleaſes. Things great and little are under his care. Nothing comes by chance, and all things, even the moſt free

and voluntary actions, even the deeds of evil men serve him, and he presides over all to make every thing issue to his glory. We are always for reasonings, always full of presumptuous murmurings, and care not that GOD should rule over us. We are ready to disavow GOD's dominion, we are ready to debate his commands, we like not his distributive justice, we would be disengaged from his interfering with the things of the world. This is the way of proud sinful man. But it is not the way of our believer. JESUS has taught him a better lesson. And he says, in correspondence with the whole of GOD's government, "I believe in GOD the Father Almighty." And his full meaning is this.

'I believe that GOD the Father holds an absolute, uncontrolable, rightful, and eternal dominion over all creatures both in heaven and earth; and as one of his subjects, however rebellious I have been, yet now, brought back again unto him by JESUS CHRIST, and emboldened to call him my father, I do humbly and reverently own his dominion over me; and I do sincerely desire to regard and respect him as my King, Lord, and Master, while I have any being in this world, and that which is to come; sincerely purposing by his grace, that no other Lord shall ever any more have dominion over me, and yielding myself with the full and free choice of my heart, and with all readiness, gladness, and joyfulness to be his subject to serve him only, from this moment unto all ages of eternity.—I do heartily consent to his authority over me, to command me in whatever way he chooses, and I am determined to do whatever he bids me, and to forbear whatever

ever he shall forbid me to do; respecting, as I do, his command as the only measure of my duty, and as the grand obligation to my obedience. And I am stedfastly purposed never to dispute his injunctions, be they what they will, but always in a dutiful manner to be satisfied with them, and according to my power to put them into practice, without gainsaying, and however contrary they may be to my carnal interest or inclinations; being certainly assured that GOD has an unlimited title to enjoin me whatever he pleases, nor less persuaded that he cannot command me any thing but what is exactly fittest for his glory and my happiness.—And I do farther declare, that, as I am perfectly satisfied our Almighty Father has a right to deal with his rebellious subjects in such a manner as he pleases, and as shall best correspond with the honour of his sovereignty and the ends of his government, so he both has dealt and will deal with us all in such manner, as that both they who serve him have and shall have infinite reason to adore his mercy and goodness, and they who perish in their disobedience, shall not have the least cause of accusing him of cruelty or injustice. I acknowledge him to be righteous in all that he has brought upon *me*, and it is of his mercies that I am not consumed. And I am so far from thinking his present or future judgments severe, that I cannot complain whatever he should do with me, having forfeited all right to his favour by my sins, and doing so every day. For which reason I hold it my bounden duty, and what is a debt to his justice and mercy, that I should never murmur under any of his dispensations, that I should receive all his favours as undeserved acts

of bounty, and eternal life as his free gift to me in JESUS CHRIST my Lord.—And finally, seeing I am assured this eternal king my father actually ordereth, disposeth, and ruleth all things great and little, not only in heaven, but also here upon earth, according to his pleasure, and in such a wise and sovereign way as his government over us demands, I do therefore heartily desire to submit quietly, thankfully, and observantly to all his disposals of me in all things and all circumstances; wishing never to be displeased with any of his dispensations, but to leave myself for life or death, health or sickness, prosperity or adversity, in all places, times, changes, and conditions, to his guidance, and being purposed by his help so to demean myself under all his providential will, as both not to dishonour him, and also to testify to my own conscience and to the world, that I really believe the providence of my GOD, that I trust upon him as my father, and submit to him as his servant. And this is what I honestly intend, and sincerely mean, when I make my confession, and say, *I believe in God the Father Almighty.*'

Here you see, brethren, the faith of a christian concerning the dominion of GOD. And you cannot but observe, that every tittle of it goes into the practice of the heart and life.

Now could you, as I went along, adopt the confession here read before you? Or if you could not as you wished, yet did you really desire to do so, and honestly purpose by the grace of GOD, that you would never cease your endeavour of coming nearer and nearer to this temper and conduct of a subject of GOD?

Then

Then I must say, *Peace be unto you. And I pray that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power: that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God, and the Lord Jesus Christ.*— But did you find this faith was not in you, that from point to point as we went on, there was a grievous opposition between your temper and that described? That you knew not GOD's dominion, and were and had been subservient to selfish and worldly aims, standing out in rebellion, and affecting still to be your own master, and independent of GOD in all your views and prospects? That you had not subjected your spirit, soul, and body to GOD's government, irreverently disregarding his commanding will, or calling the fitness of it in question, or living at your own discretion, or framing a religion from your own head, suited to your own fancy, and conforming to the will of GOD so far only as you pleased? That you could not digest GOD's distributions of rewards and punishments, being dissatisfied that every thing was not just according to your mind, displeased because there was no other way to heaven besides that disagreeable one of gospel obedience, and your heart rising with peculiar aversion against the sentence of everlasting damnation? That you had been disinclined to GOD's providential disposals, had always wished to have the management of yourself, being continually displeased with what was ministred unto you, never rich enough and great enough, things never to your mind, always dissatisfied, always complaining, always unthankful? Have you found, I say,

that you have been thus perverſely minded, quite another thing in heart and life from what a believer is, and every reaſonable creature of GOD ſhould be? Do you find that you have never owned GOD's dominion, nor ſubjected your conduct to his authority, nor paid any reverence to his tremendous threatnings or gracious promiſes, nor given yourſelf up to the guidance of his providence, but have been in the temper of your heart, and behaved in the actions of your life, as if you had been your own maſter, and there had been no GOD to rule over you, as if you had been ſent into the world to do as you liſt, and there was never any account to be taken, as if the world was made for you, and not you and it for GOD? I ſay, have you led an ungodly, idle, wicked, unhumbled, ſelfiſh life? If this be your caſe, it is plain you cannot ſay, *I believe in God the Father Almighty*; for you do not at all believe in him as Lord over *you*. No, you are a rebel, and ſo you have always been; and let me tell you, ſo GOD regards you. That indeed may ſeem a light matter now, but when the Almighty ſhall ſet the terrors of his indignation and vengeance in array againſt you, it will then not be ſo indifferent a thing as you at preſent make it. Why, my friends, what in the name of GOD do you mean to do? You will not ſurely ſtand it out in defiance? If ſo, you will infallibly fall into the hands of the living GOD; and that is a terrible thing. You cannot, can you, fight againſt him that made the worlds, and will burn them up with the breath of his mouth? You are not, you know you are not ſtronger than he. What then will the end of this be? Who do you really think will prevail? What,

What, *you*, againſt GOD? See if you can ſtand forth now, make the few following trials. Stop the courſe of yonder ſun. Stop the advance of age. Say, I will never grow old. Keep ſickneſs at a diſtance. Drive all diſappointment before you. Arreſt the hand of death, and with an authority that he dares not reſiſt, tell him, Thou ſhalt not kill me. Come, do only this. Alas, are you not able? How then can you fight againſt GOD! O what, what will the end be! As your friend I heartily adviſe you, as your Miniſter, as though GOD did beſeech you by me, I humbly plead with, intreat, and pray you to be reconciled to GOD. What a ſhame is it, when GOD condeſcends, that you ſhould ſtand out, refuſe his offered mercy, refuſe his ſervice, and ruſh upon your own ruin; will you then continue obſtinate? I truſt you will not. Hear what Mercy ſays, that mercy which waits to be gracious to you, *As I live I have no pleaſure in the death of a ſinner, why will ye die?* Hear how injured Majeſty affectingly complains, *The ox knoweth his owner, but my people will not conſider.* Hear what conſcience remonſtrates, *Wilt thou thus requite the Lord?* Hear how JESUS invites, *Come to me and be ſaved, come and I will give thee a crown of life.* Hear the voice of departed ſaints, *O follow me*; and the voice of departed ſinners, *O come not into this place of torments.* Hear the cry, the united cry of GOD, CHRIST, Angels, Miniſters, Time, Death, Judgment, Eternity, Heaven, Hell: *Return, return, and ſave thy ſoul.*

I can ſay no more. The Lord give you his grace, without which all theſe cries and calls will be ineffectual!

tual! The Lord give you his grace, and make you his happy everlasting servants. *Amen, Amen.*

Now unto the King, eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise GOD, be honour and glory for ever and ever. *Amen.*

SERMON XI.

ACTS xvi. 30, 31.

What must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.

WE are now to conclude the first article of the Creed, and to speak of the last words of it, *Maker of heaven and earth.*

The person to whom creation is here ascribed is the Father. In divers places of scripture this work is attributed to the Son, as also to the Holy Ghost. Concerning which it should be observed, that though the action of each person in the Trinity be that of the whole Godhead, inasmuch as the three persons do not subsist separately but unitedly in the same substance, yet each person has an office towards us which is peculiar to himself, the actions of which cannot in the same sense be ascribed to the other. In all acts towards us the order of the Trinity is, that the Father is the mover, and the Son executes from him

him by the Spirit, and nevertheleſs we are taught to ſay that certain actions are more proper to one of theſe divine perſons than to the others, in which view we aſcribe the work of Creation to the Father, the work of Redemption to the Son, and the work of ſanctification to the Spirit, notwithſtanding that all theſe three works are originally in the Father, and that there is a concurrence and co-operation of all the perſons in all of them.

To create, is to make what was not before. Before the creation there was nothing but GOD, who was pleaſed by an aſtoniſhing exertion of his will and power to produce all things into being, in all that beautiful order and excellent perfection wherein they ſubſiſt. He created the heaven and the earth, and all things that are in both of them. 'For by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, viſible and inviſible; whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities or powers; all things were created by him and for him.'

But ſimply to own that GOD is the maker of heaven and earth, is not to enter into the deſign of this point, conſidered as a matter of chriſtian faith. We muſt conſider what is the end of GOD's making the heaven and the earth; for whatever that be, correſpondent thereunto is the intention and diſpoſition of the perſon here profeſſing his faith. Now we are expreſsly told, that GOD *did not create the world in vain*, but that *he made all things for himſelf, for his glory, that we ſhould ſhew forth his praiſe*; becauſe not *only of him and to him*, but alſo and eſpecially *for him are all things*. And if this was the deſign of the creation, then the

faith of our professor, suitable hereunto, is an acknowledgment of GOD's right and property in all things for his glory, accompanied with a disposition to use all things accordingly. For the word is not this, 'I believe that GOD is the maker of heaven and earth;' but 'I believe *in* GOD, considered in the character of the great Creator of all things,' which implies, that I am returned from my alienation and independency to my proper place of a creature, and am willing to behave toward GOD in a creaturely manner, glorifying him as the work of his own hands ought to do. What was the temper of *Adam*'s heart while in innocence towards his Creator, and what use was he disposed to make of himself, and every thing about him? Just that is the language of the believer's heart in regard of his Creator, and what he wishes to be and do when he says, *I believe in God, the maker of heaven and earth.* The true belief of GOD as maker of all things restores the order of creation, brings into execution GOD's original design, ranges every thing in its proper place, exalts the Creator, and reduces the creature to his due estate of dependency. Wherefore to believe in the maker of heaven and earth implies,

First, A disposition with reverence, humility, and adoration to ascribe unto GOD the glory of his works. The song of the Elders is, *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.* Like unto which is the song of *David*, *The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy-work.* And elsewhere, *When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and*

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the ſtars which thou haſt ordained; *what is man, that thou art mindful of him?* Believers have their ſenſes exerciſed to diſcern the power, wiſdom, and goodneſs of GOD in his works, with admiration and ſelf-abaſement. But unto the unbeliever, neither do the heavens declare the glory of GOD's perfections, nor do they know what it is in the contemplation of GOD's wondrous works to cry out with ſhame and aſtoniſhment, *Lord, what is man?* Either, not conſidering GOD in his works, or if they do, priding themſelves in their curious diſcoveries, inſtead of humbling themſelves in the ſight of what GOD hath wrought, and giving glory to his name.

Secondly, To believe in GOD the maker of heaven and earth, implies, a diſpoſition to uſe all the creatures about us in a manner conſiſtent with GOD's deſign in making them, beſtowing them upon us, and reſtoring us to a right in them. I ſay reſtoring us to a right in them; for the original right in the creatures was forfeited in *Adam*, and no man can make other than an uſurped uſe of them unleſs he be in JESUS CHRIST, and under him reſtored to the authoriſed uſe of them. And whoever is ſo reſtored to a right in the creatures, is ſenſible that therein he enjoys an undeſerved favour, which therefore he is diſpoſed to uſe to the glory of GOD with thankfulneſs, reverence and modeſty. 'Every creature of GOD is good, and nothing to be refuſed, if it be received with thankſgiving: for it is ſanctified by the word of GOD and prayer.'

Where you ſee the diſpoſition of heart wherewith believers are to uſe all the creatures of GOD, to wit, *believingly*, as warranted to uſe them by the word of

GOD; *reverently*, as looking up to GOD the giver for a bleſſing; and *thankfully*, as being GOD's unmerited gift. And thus our believer profeſſes himſelf deſirous to uſe every creature, whether meat or drink or raiment, or whatever bleſſing or comfort of life; and in fact he does thus uſe them all in general with godly fear and humble thankfulneſs, notwithſtanding he has reaſon to complain of his coming ſhort in the meaſure of watchfulneſs and praiſe wherewith he endeavours to glorify GOD in the uſe of his creatures.

Thirdly, To believe in GOD the maker of heaven and earth, implies, a diſpoſition to regard and uſe ourſelves both in ſoul and body as GOD's creatures to his glory. *Thy hands have made me and faſhioned me: give me underſtanding, that I may learn thy commandments.* Which is as much as to ſay, 'I am thy property, for I owe my whole being to thee; and therefore I beſeech thee to inſtruct me how I ſhall uſe my whole ſelf in ſuch manner as ſhall anſwer thy deſign in making me. Cauſe me to glorify thee with every faculty of my ſoul, which is thine in all the powers thereof. Let me know thee and thy will, and contemplate thy glories in the one and the other, in the uſe I make of my *underſtanding*; let my *memory* be the treaſure-houſe of thy works and ways, thy judgments and mercies, thy promiſes, directions and threatnings; let my *will* be the counterpart of thine, pliable and ſubmiſſive to thy mind, chooſing and refuſing as thou wouldſt have me; let my *affections* all center in thee, being withdrawn from the creature, and ſet thyſelf up in my heart as the ſole object of my deſire, my hope, my delight, my joy. Cauſe me alſo

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to use every member of my body according to thy mind, and in that very way which will best promote thy glory. I have too long *yielded my members instruments of unrighteousness unto sin*, give me grace to *yield them* henceforward *instruments of righteousness unto* the *God* that made and fashioned them; that neither my hand act wickedness, nor my tongue speak perversely, nor my feet carry me to sin, nor mine eye look after iniquity, but every member in its proper use and employment may be devoted unto thee. *Give me understanding that I may learn thy commandments.*'

Fourthly, To believe in GOD the maker of heaven and earth, is, in correspondence with his design of glorifying himself in his creatures, to use in a humble dependence all the powers of my soul and body, together with all my advantages and abilities to his glory in that station and calling which he has assigned me. The glory of GOD in the creation is manifest in a happy subserviency of his creatures in their several places. The inanimate world sets us a pattern, the sun knoweth his going down, the wind and storms perform their commissions. The animal world join in the instructive lesson, they wait all upon GOD; "The young lions rore after their prey and seek their meat from GOD; the sun ariseth, they gather themselves together, and lay them down in their dens." And shall man disturb the harmony of GOD's works, shall he forget his station, and refuse to serve his Creator in his generation? Shall the moral world only be in disorder; shall men and devils pervert the order of GOD and cause confusion in his work? Shall they

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affect independency, and act as if GOD had not made them? Not so our believer. He desires to perform the part allotted him in the world. He desires to live the creature, and to be faithful in the station assigned him in the great universe; if he be a child, to be dutiful; if a parent or master, to be faithful in his house; if a minister, to dispense the word of life with all readiness of mind; if a man of business, to be diligent, honest, and chearful in his employment. In short, whatever his place be, therein so to demean himself as that GOD may be glorified in the world which he has made for himself.

That all these things are really contained in a true belief in GOD as maker of heaven and earth, may appear from an attention to their case who have not the disposition described. For,

First, Can they be said to have any belief in GOD as the creator of themselves and all things, who have no eye to see GOD in his wonderful works surrounding them as they are on every side, have not the least regard to him, though they be the work of his hand, and to all intents and purposes live in the world as if there were no GOD? I have not the least doubt there are some who hear me that do not so much as once apply their minds to think of GOD for a whole day together, and for many days together, I had almost said for weeks together, for months, in short, at all. This is rash and uncharitable you say; for how can I possibly know this? What, can I tell what is in peoples hearts? Not exactly what *is* there; but their conduct tells me what *is not* there. Would they own the truth, they would confess they have no real, deliberate

deliberate thought or regard of GOD. How can it be, when they live as they do? following the world, and following their pleasures, their minds, thoughts and hearts always taken up with some perverse thing? And can these believe in the GOD that made them? Though they pretend to say they do when they repeat the Creed, shall we, can we believe them, when they live daily as if they were their own makers and masters, as if GOD had no right over them, nor property in them? But there are others who are not so gross, men of speculation, who can read you fine lectures upon the power and wisdom of GOD in the works of creation in heaven and earth, and yet these are as far at least from the humble dependent spirit of creatures as the other. Human learning will furnish a man with many pretty and entertaining speculations; but it is grace only that teaches the heart to know its place in creation, to return to the dependent character, and with true self-abasement as creatures and sinners to own GOD the maker of heaven and earth. Philosophical inquiries are widely different from spiritual and practical knowledge; and they who have amused themselves the most in nice researches into the works of nature, and made very just observations from thence upon the perfections of GOD, shall find at last, if they have gone no farther, and have not learnt to be humbled before the great GOD their maker, that they have known nothing as they ought to know, and that the injured Maker of the world will not be satisfied with subtle speculations instead of the return of an apostate spirit, upon the offer of pardon in JESUS CHRIST, and

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by, the grace ministered in him, unto the temper and conduct of creatures dependent upon him and bowing before him.

Secondly, Does that person believe in GOD as the maker of heaven and earth, who abuses GOD's creatures to his dishonour? You cannot but be sensible, that to believe in GOD as Creator is to pay some regard to him in that character, falling in with his design in making all things. But where is this regard, if we oppose the end of creation in the use of GOD's creatures? Was it GOD's design in making food for our subsistence, that we should take occasion to indulge our palates, make a god of our bellies, or, as is sometimes done, eat almost to suffocation? Was drink provided for us to be used as it too commonly is? Had GOD any design thereby to draw us together that we might run into excess, to pass the glass from one to another till sober reason should leave us, to make us merry as it is called, that is, unguarded and dissolute, and fit for any work the devil may have for us to do? What think you, was GOD's purpose in giving us raiment? Think a little, I pray you, what it could possibly be. You that are so fond of outward adorning, of plaiting the hair, (take notice it is the word of scripture) of wearing of gold, and of putting on of apparel, ask your own consciences whether GOD made these things for the use you make of them, which is, whether you will believe it or no, to pride yourselves upon your finery, to set yourselves out as so many shews to be gazed upon and admired, and to make the world think you persons of more than

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ordinary consideration? But there is no end of particulars. O when shall we learn to use the world as not abusing it! In the mean time till we do, let us confess that we do not believe in GOD as maker of heaven and earth.

Thirdly, Can that person own GOD as his creator, who abuses his soul in the love of sin, and his body in the practice of it? To say GOD made me, soul and body, and yet in soul and body to behave as if there was no relation between GOD and me, is in effect to strike myself out of GOD's creation. To say I believe GOD gave me my soul to glorify him, and yet to have neither knowledge, nor thought, nor love, nor desire of him in my heart, but the whole bent of my soul to be after worldly things, just as if GOD had not made me, and it was not my concern to glorify him with my spirit: at the same time, to employ every member of my body in such base services as are directly subversive of GOD's purpose in giving it to me; what are these but flat contradictions? And yet how much is this the practice of many who call GOD their maker! Sirs, do you all verily judge that GOD gave you your soul and body for his use and glory? And do you all use them both with this design? What, is it the main care of all of you to give up your souls to GOD, to his glory, and your bodies also to him, to his glory? Why, when I beseech you, did many of you think of such a thing? When enquire how you might do it? When use any kind of endeavours towards it? When, I say, did you diligently inquire how GOD might be glorified in your spirit and body which are his, when set yourself to the

the performance of it, when caſt out of your heart ſuch ſtudies and purſuits as, inſtead of honouring, are diſgraceful to GOD, praying and labouring that your ſoul might be furniſhed with thoſe graces and diſpoſitions which are his due and your duty; or when forego ſuch and ſuch a practice becauſe you found it contrary to GOD's glory, or ſet yourſelf to this and that duty becauſe you found GOD would be glorified by it? Sirs, own the truth, when did you ever think or act upon this plan ſo evidently ſuited to, ſo eſſential to the juſt character of the creature? What, never? What, not for one week, one day, in your whole lives? If this has been your caſe, have you not been a blank in GOD's creation? A blank, yea, rather a blot. A foul blot in GOD's works, bearing upon your ſoul and body in the face of the whole world, nay, in the preſence of rejoicing devils, the reproach of GOD your maker. Alas, my friends, how unlike CHRIST, the faireſt among ten thouſand! How was his ſoul moulded into this one heavenly impreſſion ſtamped upon the whole of it, *glory to God!* And his life how it followed in acts of univerſal, ceaſeleſs ſubmiſſion to the divine will! *Father*, he ſaid, in the concluſion of the whole, *I have glorified thee upon earth.* Ah, my dear brethren, look upon this JESUS, and be confounded. What, cannot you take up the word of CHRIST? No; not in the leaſt deſire, attempt, endeavour? Muſt you altogether ſay, GOD, I have diſhonoured thee on earth? Then ſay not, "I believe in GOD the maker of heaven and earth." Yet,

Fourthly, Can they acknowledge GOD to be their maker, who diſhonour him in their ſpecial calling? All ſtations are GOD's appointment, and in that we are ſeverally placed in, it is every man's duty to glorify GOD, and to maintain the honour of GOD the creator. To act our part therein perverſely or negligently, is to damage the beauty of GOD's work, to diſturb the order of GOD's arrangement, and ſignally to diſgrace him that made us. Can I own GOD ſo eminently to be the maker of all things for his glory, as by my zeal, diligence and fidelity in my proper ſtation? Therefore can I otherwiſe ſo capitally diſhonour him as by a contrary conduct? What then can we conceive of ſuch as ſeem to have come to a concluſion, that they have nothing to do; that becauſe they need not work for a ſupport, therefore they may with all reaſon be idle, live upon the labours of others, lie a burden upon the public, and no living man be the better for them any farther than they cannot help their being ſo by unavoidable expences? Can we think GOD made any man thus for nought; or that to be a gentleman is not as much a calling as to be a labourer, or that there are not duties as proper to the one of them as the other? Great ones, it ſeems, if their conduct be a ſafe rule to judge by, have the privilege of doing nothing, and are exempted from the curſe laid by GOD on all the children of *Adam*, *In the ſweat of thy face ſhalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground.* But is this privilege any where in ſcripture really granted them? What ſhall we think of parents and maſters of families, who know no other uſe of their authority than to gratify their own will,

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are incomparably more careful to maintain the fear of themselves than the fear of GOD in their houses, and regard not what example they set to those who are under them? What shall we think of indolent ministers, who care not how the flock be scattered, so themselves be fed? What shall we think of supine magistrates, who are proud of the honour of their office, but take no care to discharge the duties of it? suffering the sword of justice to sleep in its sheath, and not drawing it out to cut iniquity off, and to maintain true religion and virtue? What shall we think of men of business, who leave their shops to take their pleasure, abuse their time and substance in riotous living; and while they are said to be of this and that profession, are known to have no other than that of idleness and extravagance? In short, if GOD made all things for his glory, and that glory can only be maintained by our subjection to his will and orders in our several allotments, how can GOD be glorified by those who are so far from seeking to honour GOD in their places, that they neglect the duties of them? or how can such believe in GOD as their maker?

On the whole then, we conclude, that the true, plain, and practical sense and meaning of these words is this: 'I believe GOD the Father, the governor of the world, to be the maker of it, for his own glory. It is my desire that he may be glorified by all the works of his hands. For my own part, since by the power and grace of JESUS CHRIST I am brought out of that horrible state of darkness, alienation and sin wherein, with the whole fallen race of *Adam*, I lay by nature, I am ready and do purpose to behave

towards

towards GOD as his creature and ſubject in every reſpect, chearfully returning to my place under him in his great creation, and determining to bring all the glory to him that is in my power. With ſhame, abaſement and reverence, I own his wiſdom, power and goodneſs, in making me and all things out of nothing, and I deſire to think and act as one who derives all I am and have from him, uſing all the various bleſſings he has provided for me with thankfulneſs, acknowledgment, calling upon his name, and due fear of diſhonouring my maker by uſing them amiſs. I regard myſelf as his workmanſhip, formed to ſet forth his praiſe; and I yield up my every power of ſoul and body to be employed unto his glory according to his will; fully reſolved never again to give up my ſoul to thoſe thoughts and ſtudies which pride, intereſt and indulgence ſuggeſt, nor my body to ſerve the baſe purpoſes which theſe luſts have too much directed me to purſue; but univerſally in both to remember and ſerve my Creator. And inaſmuch as GOD has honoured me with a ſpecial place and ſtation under him in his creation, to that I am determined to have a ſpecial regard, and to carry myſelf in it in ſuch a manner that his honour may ſuffer no more damage through my negligence and fault; but laying aſide the conſideration of my own praiſe, or intereſt, or convenience, and every other worldly reſpect, I do profeſs and declare that to promote his glory therein both is, and by his grace ſhall be, my great endeavour and aim. In one word; I judge it my bounden duty, and it is my real choice, in every thing to think and act as the creature of GOD, dependent upon him and ſubſervient

to

to him. And this is what I avow myself determined to do, when I say, *I believe in God the maker of heaven and earth.*'

Take one word at parting. What a confusion has sin brought into GOD's creation? Angels began the apostasy, man has followed them. Who would think that GOD has made us, to see what we do? Sin has subverted all. Sin has put creation into disorder. What is become of the glory of GOD in his works? But I see the Restorer of the breach. Immanuel is come to restore all things, to exalt the Creator, by bringing in to their allegiance some of the proud apostates, and to make the others know with the sinners of hell that GOD shall be glorified. What an undertaking! Look at your hearts, my friends, and see what an undertaking! Who is sufficient for it? Why, JESUS is. He that brought beauty, harmony and order out of the first chaos, is able to do it. He can, he will; he has already in part. Look again to your hearts, believers, and see if he has not; for your Creator again reigns there. In part, you say; but it shall be wholly. Witness the first-born which are written in heaven, the spirits of just men made perfect. Yes, the day is coming, when ye shall say, what hath the hand of the Lord wrought! To him that was able to subdue all things to himself, to him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto GOD and his Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. *Amen.*

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SERMON XII.

ACTS XVI. 30, 31.

What must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.

WE have gone through the several points contained under the first article of the Creed, and which are relative to GOD the Father. The second branch has regard to GOD the Son, and his office as Redeemer.

Now the subject matter contained herein is this. *First*, You profess your belief in JESUS as your all-sufficient Saviour. And then, *Secondly*, You declare the grounds upon which such your belief in him as your Saviour doth stand, to wit, 1. As having been duly anointed to this office, implied in the name, CHRIST; 2. As being the *only Son* of the Father; 3. As being *our Lord*; 4. As having been *conceived of the Holy Ghost*; and *born of the Virgin Mary*; having *suffered under Pontius Pilate*; been *crucified*, *dead*, *and buried*; and having *descended into hell*. 5. As having *risen the third day from the dead*, and *ascended into heaven*; as *sitting on the right hand of God the Father Almighty*; and as *coming from thence to judge the quick and the dead*. The word JESUS, you see, must be carried forward to all the points that follow; and the service is, I believe in JESUS, as being the anointed, as being the only Son, as being our Lord,

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as conceived, born, crucified, and dead; as risen, ascended, exalted, and coming to judgment. His mediatorial sufficiency depends on all this together, and therefore there is not so much as one point to be omitted consistently with a real belief in JESUS as a complete Saviour.

The first and great point, which is the result of all the rest, is, *I believe in Jesus.*

The word JESUS, every one knows, signifies *Saviour.* And therefore when I say, I believe in JESUS, I declare, that I believe in him as my Saviour; which nevertheless is impossible any farther than I am both sensible of my want of salvation, in regard of those things wherein he is a Saviour, and also that in all those respects he is sufficient and suited to my purpose. To talk of believing in a Saviour, when I really find not a want of a Saviour, is to talk nonsense; and to declare, that I believe in JESUS as sufficient every way to save me, when, being unacquainted with those sure grounds upon which his saving power stands, I am not really satisfied that he is able to save me, is to assert a direct palpable falsehood. Consequently, whoever says truly I believe in JESUS, is as well acquainted with his being in a miserable helpless and undone estate in himself, as that there is a fulness and sufficiency in JESUS to help him completely out of it. Without the former, namely, an acquaintance with our misery and helplessness, there is an absolute impossibility of believing in JESUS; and it is only in proportion with our acquaintance with the latter, namely, his sufficiency, that we can exalt him in our hearts as the Saviour we profess him

to

to be unto us. As to the grounds upon which the perſon here ſpeaking is confirmed in the ſufficiency of JESUS to ſave him, they will be conſidered afterwards, here they are ſuppoſed to be known and believed: and not leſs the profeſſor's ſenſe of his miſery and helpleſſneſs in himſelf. So that the words are the declaration of one, who having found miſery in himſelf, and help in one that is mighty to ſave, openly avows, that JESUS is all his ſalvation. Now in this plain, reaſonable, and, I conceive, inconteſtible ſtate of the matter, it appears, that in the words before us are implied, an acknowledgment of all that miſery from which JESUS is ſaid in the ſcripture to be come to ſave us; and alſo that the whole hope and confidence of the ſoul are lying on him. And ſo of courſe to ſay, I believe in JESUS, is as much as to declare,

Firſt, I believe in him as my deliverer from the power of darkneſs and ignorance.

Secondly, I believe in him as my deliverer from the curſe of the law, due unto me, and threatened againſt me for my ſins.

Thirdly, I believe in him as my deliverer from all my ſpiritual enemies.

Fourthly, I believe in him as my great, final, and full deliverer at his judgment-day.—In all which points it will be neceſſary to obſerve as we go along, both that there is a renunciation of ourſelves, and alſo an acceptation of JESUS; and at the ſame time to inquire how it ſtands with ourſelves concerning it.

Firſt, I believe in him as my deliverer from the power of darkneſs and ignorance. Man by nature is in a ſtate of blindneſs and ignorance. All that he can

ſee of ſpiritual things, without the light of the Word and Spirit, is but that confuſed, traditionary knowledge that has been handed down from generation to generation, the effect of which is little other than ſelf-condemnation; and even that knowledge I ſay *traditionary*, not acquired by the exerciſe of man's reaſon, but received by information from others, though indeed capable of being reaſoned upon afterwards, and ſo of conſiderable improvement. Man, ſince the Fall, is (without the help of foreign light) in a ſtate of utter ſpiritual darkneſs; a reaſonable creature, but incapable of diſcerning ſpiritual things by any exerciſe of his unaſſiſted reaſon; nay, and when that foreign light is afforded him, he cannot be benefited, or underſtand the things that are declared by it, unleſs by a ſupernatural influence both his will be ſtirred up to ſeek into it, and his mind enlightened to receive it. This is the ſcripture account of the matter; where we are ſaid *to be darkneſs*, to be *without God in the world*, to be *without hope*, and the wiſeſt of us, *by all our wiſdom, not to know God.* Of this his natural eſtate of blindneſs and ignorance our profeſſor is made duly ſenſible; as he is alſo, that JESUS, by the light of the Word and Spirit, is the only one who can direct his ſteps. He aſcribes it to JESUS, that he was at firſt enlightened whilſt he lay in his dark ſtate of ſin and ignorance, and was made to diſcern and ſee the ſinfulneſs and miſery of that condition, and the way out of it prepared by the mercy of GOD, and executed by the only-begotten made fleſh. And he is equally well adviſed, by ſelf-experience, that, left to himſelf, he ſhould inſtantly loſe ſight of all the glorious things belonging

belonging to his peace, which are now ſo evidently and delightfully before his eyes; and that it is the Lord therefore who hath made, and ſtill makes his darkneſs to be light.

Now here you ſee is a manifeſt renunciation of the ſufficiency of human reaſon, both to diſcover to us any of the things of GOD, and more eſpecially the way of peace in the moſt needed Redeemer. The true believer in JESUS has no high conceit of his own powers as they now are in his fallen ſtate. He cannot cry up human reaſon to make revelation needleſs; no, nor to ſit as a judge upon the declarations of infinite wiſdom, meaſuring them by the pretended rule of what is called natural religion, and rejecting what does not come within the reach of man's underſtanding. He gladly accepts the offered light; is well content to take any thing upon GOD's authority; waits continually to be taught the will of GOD and the way of ſalvation; and will truſt neither to himſelf nor others for the truth of divine things, but only to JESUS, *that great prophet that ſhould come into the world.*—But this I fear is not the common way.

Thoſe were they, a long while ago, who diſclaimed all teaching of the Spirit as mere pretence, or as they were pleaſed to call it, cant and enthuſiaſm. Indeed pretenſions thereto, without the word, are no better than enthuſiaſm. But if the Spirit, without the Word, be deluſion, the Word, without the Spirit, to the unaſſiſted mind in its natural and corrupted ſtate, is dark, unprofitable and unſanctifying. Nevertheleſs reaſon has been thought ſufficient of itſelf to fathom and unfold the deep things of GOD. And ſee what the re-

jection of the Spirit has come to; depraved reason, because not able to comprehend, has mangled and tortured the great doctrines of the gospel; taken away the whole power of the word, and left it an unanimated and unanimating lump; a little better, and that is all, than the dry philosophy of the Heathen. The wise and the prudent, they that would be so without GOD'S making, have very reasonably and justly had the distinguishing and quickening truths of the gospel hid from them, while those very doctrines have, in the plainest manner, been revealed unto babes by the Spirit, opening their understandings that they might understand the scriptures. But while man's wisdom, by disclaiming the illumination of the Spirit, at least in practice if not in express terms, has put down GOD'S word, I mean as to the distinguishing and vital doctrine of it, the people have suffered irreparable damage; the power of godliness has died away, and even moral honesty and decency, being stript of their main supports, have been forced to give ground to a general libertinism and licentiousness. I will not conceal the truth; the present dissoluteness of manners among us, began in the exploding the operations of the Spirit; so the Scriptures being a sealed book, because the key to them was thrown away, every man set his blind reason to interpret them; mysteries were set apart or lowered to nothing; and the gospel came forth not unlike a painted sun on a canvass, bearing some poor resemblance of the original, but absolutely without light or heat. But this is not all; our forefathers, in the pride of their reason, having refused the aid of the Spirit, and thereby missed of the whole

spiritu-

ſpirituality of GOD's word, we of this age, their ſtill wiſer children, have too many of us proceeded farther, and to the refuſal of the Spirit, boldly added a renunciation of the Word alſo. Reaſon it ſeems cannot digeſt many things that are there; ſome things in it are not to be comprehended, and how can we believe what we cannot comprehend? Others are objectionable; we do not ſee the reaſonableneſs and conſiſtency of them; others are contrary to our notions of things, neither can we reconcile it, how GOD ſhould determine and direct as he is ſometimes there ſaid to do. Every little pretender to knowledge and debate, will have his fling at the Bible; reaſon is ſet up in its place. Reaſon, that noble faculty, which, it ſeems, is capable of reaching through the univerſe; of ſounding the very depths of GOD's government; can, as if brought up with him, nicely adjuſt the meaſure of all his counſels, determine the reaſon of all his doings, and exactly point out what is fit for him to expect from his creatures; in ſhort, do every thing, except it be the one needful thing, find out a way how the poor guilty ſinner ſhall be ſaved.

The conteſt you ſee is between reaſon and JESUS; whether the Fall has left our underſtandings darkened and inſufficient to any ſpiritual diſcernment, and we need to be taught of JESUS, who is come, by his Word and Spirit, to teach us all things which pertain unto life and godlineſs; or whether we ſtand not in any need of this his teaching, having power ſufficient in our own unaſſiſted reaſon to diſcern the way of life in the Scriptures without the Spirit, or to diſcover a ſcheme of religion for ourſelves without the help of

the one or the other. It is evident, that they, who ſet up reaſon againſt the Spirit or the Word, cannot take CHRIST for their teacher, neither can they ſay with an honeſt conſcience, *I believe in Jeſus*, ſince one grand point of the ſalvation which he claims as his property to give us, and which we, when we ſay, we believe in him, declare that we hold from him, is deliverance from darkneſs and ignorance concerning all the things of GOD. The point is of the very firſt importance. In fact, nothing can be right if we fail here. Reaſon muſt firſt yield, otherwiſe we diſpute every ſtep of goſpel-ſalvation; we quarrel at the juſtice of GOD's ſentence againſt us as ſinners; cannot be brought to think we are ſuch helpleſs creatures as GOD tells us we are; and at no rate can digeſt, either his method of juſtifying us by the righteouſneſs of another, or thoſe other ſelf-denying duties which the goſpel injoins us. The pride of reaſon muſt bow, elſe the ſalvation of the goſpel will never take place. *We muſt become fools if we will be wiſe*; and in order that we may ſubmit ourſelves to CHRIST's teaching, we muſt put on the temper of little children, who, becauſe they know nothing, are pliable to receive every thing from their parents and teachers. And till we do this, or any farther than we do it, coming wholly for inſtruction to CHRIST's Word, and praying for his Spirit, let us not preſume to ſay what contradicts our practice, *I believe in Jeſus*. But,

Secondly, I believe in JESUS implies this alſo, "I believe in him as my deliverer from the curſe of the law due to me, and threatened againſt me for my ſins. I acknowledge myſelf a ſinner, conceived in ſin, the deadly

deadly body of which remains within me; I cannot do any thing as I ought; as formerly, so now I am daily sinning in thought, word, and deed, insomuch that at no time, nor in any one instance, have I been able, or am I now able to answer the high, but most holy and desirable demands of the law. I cannot make any claim to life by my own doings; for I do not what the law requires of me. On that footing there is nothing before me but death, which GOD, I am satisfied, has in perfect righteousness and justice appointed to be the wages of sin; neither have I the least remedy, help or hope in myself. I cannot make the injured GOD satisfaction; in no way can I do this. Not by better obedience, certainly all thought of that is vain; it would not cancel past offences; and the wages of every sin of my life is death; death, which may not be remitted, which must be endured; while also every day and hour I am sinning afresh, and adding to the number of my provocations and the load of my guilt. I cannot therefore make GOD satisfaction by better obedience. No, nor would my endurance of ten millions of years imprisonment in hell, retrieve the disgrace my sins have brought upon him. The wrath to come is eternal, because injured Majesty can never be satisfied by any measure of punishment laid upon sinners. There is then utterly no hope in myself; but I have heard of JESUS; I know him to be the Son of GOD; I am satisfied his business in the world was to save sinners; I am assured that infinite GOD as he is, he took up our nature; in that nature he put all possible, and more than conceivable honour upon the law by his obedience unto it; and by his death made such

a ſatisfaction to GOD's juſtice, as ten thouſand times ten thouſand hells could not equal. Him GOD has accepted in his atonement for ſinners: for I ſee him for his obedience unto death, exalted to glory and immortality, as the repreſentative of believing ſinners. I hear, in conſideration of that death, the moſt bleſſed promiſes iſſued out from the court of heaven, and recorded in that book which ſhall outlive the world. GOD himſelf has told me, *that all that believe in him ſhall not periſh, but have everlaſting life.* Yea, he has commanded me, upon the peril of my ſoul, *to believe on the Name of his only-begotten Son.* Since then GOD will have it ſo, and will get himſelf glory by freely juſtifying the ungodly, I have humbly taken him at his word, and do put in my claim to his pardon and acceptance, in conſideration of the obedience and death of JESUS. Hither am I come for refuge, and here do I reſt my ſoul upon the Redeemer's righteouſneſs. Confeſſing my ſins, I lay my hand upon his head, and aſk the offered mercy, and proclaim this to be all my ſalvation: while in the ſight of all my guilt, in the proſpect of death, and judgment and hell, I joyfully take up my word, and ſay, I believe in JESUS. Let others ſeek ſalvation, and reſt their hope where they will, I believe in JESUS."

Here you find is a plain renunciation of all ſelf-righteouſneſs, and as plain and full acceptance of the righteouſneſs of JESUS. And, in truth, what an abſurdity is it, to declare a belief in JESUS for pardon and acceptance with GOD, when we are cleaving, either in whole or in part, unto a pretended righteouſneſs of our own? You cannot but obſerve, that to accept

cept CHRIST's righteousness is to disclaim our own as utterly insufficient; and when we say, I believe in JESUS, what do we other than publish our relinquishing all hope from the one, and our placing all hope in the other, since it is so evident that the point before us is a matter of christian faith, and that, as persons saved by grace, we do hereby acknowledge our consent to such salvation? Yet after all, this is sooner said than done. There are many things standing in the way of our saying in sincerity of heart, I believe in JESUS as my deliverer from the curse of the law due to me and threatened against me for my sins. Wherefore we shall do well seriously to inquire into this business. I would ask therefore two very plain questions.

1. Are we all truly made sensible that we have no righteousness of our own? By righteousness is meant, a conformity with the law of GOD in heart and life. Whoever can produce this conformity with the law of GOD, is certainly righteous; has a righteousness of his own upon which he may safely stand, and has no manner of need of the righteousness of JESUS the Saviour. But then you must take notice, this must be a *perfect* conformity of heart and life, and that *at all times*, for the law speaks but one language, and admits of no abatements. Should there be outward perfect conformity, yet, if the inward be wanting, that could not avail; yea, and though there should be outward and inward both, yet, if it were not always so, we could not pretend any right, as sinless. Upon this state of the case, every man without exception is ready to own, "I am not come up to this,

we are all sinners." Even they who do not see their hearts, and the ocean of iniquity that is there, cannot help owning, that in word and deed they have many times sinned; and they who do know their hearts will be as ready to own, that matters have been a great deal worse with them. Now you would be apt to think, when people talk at this rate, they do very readily disclaim all self-righteousness, and lean on nothing within themselves. But in truth it is no such matter, we have many a shift under all this acknowledgment of guilt to make ourselves easy. We have the art of making small account of sins, and great account of duties; putting out the eye of conviction by the many good things we seemingly do, and teaching our consciences to say, they are not such mighty matters in which we are to blame. We have a strange dexterity in finding out excuses, and so letting the thing pass as if it were nothing; "It is true I was very angry, but they provoked me, and the like." We have a trick of forgetfulness; commit sin, and, in a day or two, all is as if we had never done amiss. We are very ready at comparisons; "O I would not do as such a one does for the world! What will the world come to? what, have people lost all shame?" We are ready to put one thing against another, as the saying is, "True, I have done so and so, but then, in other things, no one can say any harm of me; for I am sure no one can say I am whore, thief or drunkard." There is no end of those inventions which pride will be suggesting to patch up a sort of righteousness, upon which people will sleep as quietly as if the law had laid no charge

againſt them, or as if they were ſecured under the righteouſneſs of CHRIST. Now, brethren, are none of you upon this footing? Are none of you thinking pretty well of yourſelves upon the whole, and for one thing and another hoping that you are in a tolerable caſe, although you have not ſeriouſly ſeen your loſt condition as ſinners, nor come to JESUS to ſave you from the wrath that is to come? This is no uncommon caſe, it is moſt certain; and if it were the caſe of none of us, we ſhould not lead the cold, ſelfiſh, lukewarm, indifferent lives that too many of us do.

2. But if we are really ſenſible that we have no righteouſneſs of our own, are we not going about to ſeek one as well as we can? It is a common language I know upon ſick beds, "O, if I recover, I will never do as I have done." And without queſtion what ſome do in ſickneſs, others practiſe in health, to wit, ſtifle convictions by reſolutions.

Then again, you may be apt to think in yourſelf, "Well, for my part, I have done with pleaſures and company keeping; it is not with me now as it was formerly; I have done with the world; I read my Bible, and keep my church, and ſay my prayers. Surely things are altered with me much for the better."

Or you may go about to ſet up your own righteouſneſs this way, "Come, I will be charitable, I will give to the poor," thinking to make amends for your ſins by your liberality. Or this way again, "O, if I could but forſake and get the better of ſuch a thing, if it were not for ſuch a particular ſin that I ſo often fall into! That muſt be forſaken, and then

all will be right." Devices of this kind are very natural to the pride of man, and which, I doubt not, every person here present has found his heart busily employed in at one time or other. But, in the mean time, they are but so many tricks to heal up the wounds of a gnawing conscience, to stop true conviction of sin, and to keep us from CHRIST, without whom we perish. Can any purpose, or even practice of reformation, with never so many good things performed by us, make up for old sins, that is, (for nothing less will do) make them in truth to be none? If not, if they are still our sins, are not we still chargeable with them? Who should, but ourselves? And has not GOD said, *The wages of sin is death?* How then shall that sentence be annulled? There are two capital objections to this scheme which we are considering. The one is, that a perfect conformity to GOD's law *now*, could I attain it, would make no satisfaction for *past* iniquities; for, in that case, I should only do my present duty, and consequently leave the debt of old sins just where it was, absolutely undischarged. The other, that I do not in fact now conform to GOD's law, no nor ever shall, according to the strict spirituality of it; so that, in reality, the longer I live, the more I enlarge my debt, and the obligation to punishment. But notwithstanding this, many still who have not a righteousness of their own, will be for getting one as well as they can, vainly hoping to stand in it before GOD.

Now, in either of these cases, you must needs see, there can be no real belief in JESUS CHRIST for pardon and acceptance with GOD. If either we conceit

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we have a righteouſneſs of our own, or are ſeeking to get one, we are quite out of GOD's way of juſtifying the ungodly by the righteouſneſs of JESUS. And I beſeech you, let us conſider; we ſay, we believe in JESUS: but do we ſo, when we truſt in ourſelves? Is it poſſible I ſhould make both my own righteouſneſs and that of JESUS my foundation at once? The truth is, we do not go cloſely to the bottom with ourſelves to ſee the truth of our caſe; we have and can have no legal righteouſneſs. That GOD knows, and therefore in mercy has provided one for us in JESUS. But if you doubt this, ſtate the matter fairly before your own conſcience. Have you ever anſwered, or can you now anſwer the demands of the law? If you ſay, no; (and that you muſt ſay, if you know but never ſo little of GOD's law, and of your own heart) then it is plain to your conſcience that you are deſtitute of the laws of righteouſneſs, and are a ſinner. And thereupon the queſtion is, how will you get GOD's favour? What, by your own righteouſneſs, when you ſay you have and can have none? or by the righteouſneſs of JESUS, which GOD has provided for you? GOD's favour is what you want. But then, ſince you are a ſinner, you have no right to it, and muſt be thankful to take it in GOD's own way; otherwiſe you will go without it, and your ſins, guilt and puniſhment reſt on your own head. It is the thought of That ſhould alarm you. O think of it with all ſoberneſs. You have ſinned, and death ſtandeth at the door. How great a death! and how eternal! O think of your ſins, and think of your ſentence, and think how you can poſſibly eſcape, if you neglect ſo great ſalvation!

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SERMON XIII.

ACTS xvi. 30, 31.

What must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.

TO believe in JESUS implies this, I believe in him as my Deliverer from all my spiritual enemies. The great spiritual enemy, under which all the others fight, and by means of which they bring us into any danger, is Original Sin, variously called, *the flesh*, the *law of sin*, the *body of this death and of sin*, and many times *sin* simply, by way of eminence; that principle of sin in fallen man, which, on the one hand, is enmity against GOD, not enduring either his service or his presence; and, on the other, is perpetually soliciting the soul to sensual, earthly, and devilish things; by its perverse motions filling the imagination with sinful and vain thoughts, and thereby blinding the understanding that it should not discern spiritual things, and biassing the will that it should not choose them. These effects, in the full power of them, does the principle of sin produce in the unregenerate; while they, who are indeed regenerate, experience the baleful influence of it still abiding in them, both in keeping them from that nearness and perfectness of heart with GOD, which they earnestly long for, and ceaselessly exciting in them its motions of pride, worldliness, and carnality. It is by means

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of this principle, that the men, or things of the world have influence and power to ſtop, and retard the believer in his progreſs to glory; or that the devil can gain any effectual opportunity to diſmay, or ſeduce us. Finally to be delivered from this body of ſin, is the believer's firſt deſire; *I ſhall be ſatisfied when I awake with thy likeneſs.* But, in the mean time, he earneſtly wiſhes as well to be kept from the power of it (ſo that he may be always enabled to oppoſe its ſuggeſtions, whenever upon occaſion, from without, of the world, or the devil, they riſe up in him pleading for indulgence) as to find its influence abating, and its ſtrength declining, from day to day.

This ſhews you what the believer means by his ſpiritual enemies. And the ground of his believing in JESUS for dominion over them, is twofold; partly, becauſe he knows and finds that he cannot of himſelf either obtain or keep the maſtery of them; and partly, becauſe he knows the Saviour can. — He knows he cannot himſelf from the very nature of the thing, becauſe it is the property of this principle of ſin to keep him from GOD, and to lead him quite the other way in a courſe of indulgence, covetouſneſs, and pride of one ſort or another; and this principle is in him, and actually conſtitutes his preſent nature, ſo that it muſt of courſe, as every creature's nature does, reign over him, if left to himſelf, without either will or power in him to reſtrain it. Nor is this all the proof he has of his inſufficiency hereunto. Experience has taught him, and does teach him the ſame thing. The body of ſin has had, and ſtill has its weight. It always keeps him from living ſo near

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to GOD as he would, and from being disposed towards him as he wishes and ought to be; while also he finds every day, that those sinful motions which are proper to it are too many, and too busy, that he should be able in any one instance to keep his conduct undefiled by them, or free, in many sad instances, from such success, as abundantly shames and grieves him in seeing thereby what he is. Scripture also adds its testimony unto his absolute inability to subdue his spiritual enemies, asserting, in the plainest terms, *that without Christ we can do nothing*, assuring us, that *in us*, that is, *in our flesh*, *dwelleth no good thing*, and ascribing all the good that is wrought in any of us unto GOD, who, it is said, *himself worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure*.—But what he knows himself unable to do for himself, he knows JESUS is able to do for him, who was raised up, *that we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us, so that being delivered we might serve him, without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life*. In which regard JESUS is said to be *made of God unto us sanctification*. This is a character in which he is represented by the Prophet: *He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness. Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord*. His fulfilment of which is attested by the Evangelist in the person of himself and of all believers, *Of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace*. As to this point therefore, he who professes belief in JESUS, doth thereby

thereby disclaim dependence on his own strength, (if the term be not improper, since in spiritual things, and against his spiritual enemies, he has evidentally none) and declare his trust is in the strength of JESUS. How this matter stands with us in fact ought to be considered. The point is, have we a real experience that there is a principle of sin in us, which must absolutely prevent us from every thing good, if we are left to ourselves, neither enabled nor supported by the grace of CHRIST?

If we find such a principle of sin in us, the tendency of which is to keep us from GOD, and fix us upon the pursuits of this present world, then the case is clear, and we must seek help where we can obtain it. But can we seek that help, when either we deny there is any such principle in us, or though we own it in speculation, yet have not concern enough about our souls to take any care it may not rule over us? There are they who deny it, though themselves are among the most pregnant proofs of it in the whole of their conduct, being evidently led along by principles of pride, or covetousness, or sensual inclination; which it were hard to conceive how they could have contracted by the mere force of custom; and the uniformity of which in all the children of men abundantly shews to be the effects of that same one principle of sin which is in the nature of all alike, and makes our hearts as like one another as our faces. But though you own your fallen state doctrinally, what can it avail while you have no concern to be converted unto GOD, and daily renewed in your mind by the power of the Holy Ghost? How, in that case,

caſe, can you believe in JESUS? You may declare a renunciation of your own ſtrength, and an acceptance of his; but, if all be in your head, you are juſt where you were, and be aſſured, once for all, JESUS is no Saviour of yours. Yet, my dear brethren, what proof can many of you give that it is at all otherwiſe with you? If you were really ſenſible that you wanted the grace of Chriſt to deliver you from the power and dominion of original ſin, ſupported, as it is, upon its throne by the wiles of the devil and the enjoyments of the world; and if at the ſame time you heartily deſired to be ſet free from that deteſtable ſervice, would you not, knowing that JESUS alone was able to help you, make very frequent, and importunate applications for his aid? But now, ſay in conſcience, when did you ſo? When did you fall down before him and ſincerely beſeech him, that he would vouchſafe to deliver you from that body of ſin you found in you? I do not aſk, when you did ſomething which you call ſaying your prayers, and doing your duty (that you may do a great deal of after a certain manner, and be even nothing the better) but I aſk, when you prayed for a new heart; to be ſet at liberty from ſin; to have that pride which is in you done away; your covetouſneſs mortified; your love of pleaſure, company, and indulgence crucified? What, never? No, I am perfectly aſſured, never to any purpoſe; never heartily and honeſtly. You have not done it, and you do not do it; you know you do not, and I know, as well as you, that you do not. Nay, you are ſaying, does the man pretend to know our hearts, can he know what paſſes in our chambers

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and closets? Yes, verily, thus far I certainly know, and so may any one else, that neither in your chamber, nor in the church, nor any where else, you really pray for a new heart, and deliverance from the dominion of your sinful nature; for if you did, you would be most assuredly set free; since GOD has promised to give the spirit to them that ask him; and yet you are not set free, but are as much as ever the slave of your own lusts; as much as ever without GOD in the world; proud, wilful, impatient, earthly, covetous, idle, vain, intemperate as much as ever. And yet you will be saying, I believe in JESUS. Surely you can have no thought of what you are doing when you say so, since it is so manifestly false, and the contrary is this moment so incontestibly evident to your own conscience. O, Sir! consider, how that word, *I believe in Jesus*, which you have so often said in vain in the midst of GOD's people, and as if you had been one of their happy number, consider how that word must rise up in the judgment against you? how it must shame, confound, and condemn you in the face of the dishonoured JESUS sitting on the clouds of heaven with the assembled world before him, attended by the whole host of ministring angels, and holding up the righteous balance to weigh your doings in order to the allotment of your place of future eternal residence, whether it shall be heaven or hell.

Fourthly, To believe in JESUS implies this also; I believe in him as my full, final, and eternal deliverer: which is as much as to say, I look for a perfection of holiness in my soul, a glorious resurrection of my body, and a life everlasting in him. *Christ is*

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not only *of God made unto us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification*, but also *redemption*; which as it stands distinguished from the other three, has reference to the final completion and finishing of his work of salvation begun in the present exercise of his offices towards us, as our prophet, priest and king, by whom we are now (as many as believe) taught, justified, and sanctified. Perfection of happiness is impossible without these two things, *First*, Perfect holiness in the soul. *Without holiness no man shall see the Lord*; absolute unholiness is a total disqualification for any such sight of GOD, as brings the least measure of happiness along with it: and therefore perfect holiness is absolutely necessary to perfect happiness in GOD. And this our professor waits for in JESUS, and by the operation of his mighty grace. He cannot effect it of himself: as well might he have made himself out of nothing. It is a divine work, and is called *creation* in the scriptures. In the old creation GOD finished that whole glorious work in six days, but the perfecting this unto its whole beauty, glory, and order, is carried on progressively, beginning in regeneration, which is the first implanting in the soul of the fallen creature that principle of grace, which gaining strength by perpetual influences of the Spirit who first begat it, and by various discipline of every kind suited thereunto, grows up towards that perfect state to which it shall be advanced in the future world; when, besides other dispensations in this life, which have tended and been made effectual to the daily mortification of the body of sin, the whole of it shall have been utterly destroyed by death, and JESUS *present the Church unto*

unto himself, holy, without blemish, spot, wrinkle, or any such thing, in virtue of that most certain but inexpressible union subsisting between him and it.

Now, my friends, what can the polishing of philosophy do in so great a business? There has been much talk about governing the passions, and restraining the appetites, and bringing up the mind to a manly steadiness, by the force of reason. This was well attempted indeed by those who had no greater light. But alas, how unsuccessfully! The principle of sin, which is in all, only took another road; and by the excess of pride laid restraint on the rage of inclination. To be born again, to be perfected in holiness, is the work of GOD. In vain may we think of attempting it by our own powers. As well might an angel essay burning up the universe, to make a new heaven and earth out of its ashes. But to know what the work is, confounds all human confidence, and every soul sensible of its own insufficiency cries out, *Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me!* To renounce ourselves here seems to be but little; to believe in the power of JESUS to restore us to the perfection of holiness is a greater matter; but the main thing of all is, to be looking, waiting for, longing after, and striving to obtain this perfect holiness. I believe in JESUS to perfect my spirit in holiness, implies indeed a renunciation of all help in myself for it; but then it implies more, namely, that I am expecting it at the hand of JESUS, that it is my grand object and aim that he may purge and purify my soul daily, and at last finish his work, because I earnestly long to be fit for GOD; to be perfectly

fectly like him; to have done with sin for ever; and to be as the blessed angels, whose souls bear the exactest impression of GOD's glorious perfections, who see his face, and are infinitely happy in fulfilling his commandments and hearkening to the voice of his words. This is the main point. Without this, all pretended belief of the power of JESUS to restore our fallen nature is but fancy and speculation, leaving us, where it found us, in our fallen state, unmeet for GOD, and what then meet for? Ah! Brethren, ye know; ye certainly know. Ye have heard of fallen angels: and what are they meet for? It is for everlasting fire their unholy souls are fit; and, furious as they are, they tremble in the expectation of it. And what? have you no better hope? Is this also your expectation, to have your portion with devils? Sirs, there are but two places that I ever heard of in the eternal world, heaven and hell. Now as many of you as are unholy are not fit for heaven; but ye are fit for hell: ye carry every qualification for it daily about you. You may think what you please, but a spirit that stands out against GOD's government, and will not stoop to his law and providence; a spirit of pride and high-mindedness, that seeks itself, and takes to itself the praise and glory of every thing; a spirit of ambition, that wants to make a figure, and to hold others in subjection; a spirit of anger, revenge, and bitterness, a spirit of resentment and implacableness; a spirit of envy, and jealousy, is a state of qualification for hell; and what makes any man meet for the society of those malignant spirits, who shall be shut up therein for ever, and eternally prevented from vexing

vexing any others but their associates with these horrid dispositions. And are any of us preparing for hell? making ourselves daily more meet for that terrible place? None designedly; but every soul of us really, who is not seeking after holiness by the power of the Holy Ghost. It is awful to think what a condition many of us are in! For are we all seeking holiness? All of us seeking the mortification of our corrupt affections, and the renewal of our hearts after GOD's image and likeness? It is impossible. Can it be? What, when some are mad after pleasure, and some are mad after company, and some are mad after money? When we live in the practice of known sins, and in the neglect of known duties? When we will not bear to be told our faults, or if we must bear to hear them, take no care to mend them? When, in short, it is so evident, that the pursuit of holiness is not our main concern, and any thing that looks like it is but taken up by the bye? Yet surely they have made the better choice, who are seeking the inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away; and who, instead of making provision for the flesh to fulfil its lusts, and of laying up treasures upon earth, are preparing for glory, and laying up for their souls treasures of grace that will never wax old, but endure unto life everlasting. These are they, and these only, who can truly say, I believe in JESUS.— This is one qualification for perfect happiness, namely, perfection of holiness in the soul. 2*dly*, The other is, a spiritualized body, which may not only enjoy perfect health and vigour, but also, instead of being a clog to the soul, as the case now is, may be fitted

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to assist and serve it in all its holy operations and employments. Such is the now glorified body of JESUS unquestionably, and such shall be the resurrection-body of all his saints, for he shall fashion them like unto his glorious body by his mighty power. Of this point I say nothing farther at present, as it will have a distinct consideration in the end of the Creed. Only suitably to our purpose I remark, that JESUS must give this glorified body; for surely no man can take it up of himself, and that it is what our professor waits for at his hands. The glorious prospect refreshes his spirit under present pain, and approaching dissolution. *I know that my Redeemer liveth*, he is ready to say on every pressing occasion, *and that he shall stand at the latter day on the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God.*

"And when that happy day shall be come, when the last enemy, (glorious thought, the last! therefore Satan shall have been put under my feet before, therefore sin shall have been destroyed before, therefore all danger of hell shall have been past before) when the last enemy shall be destroyed, then what remains for me but an endless weight of glory? I shall see GOD, I shall see him as he is, I shall be like him, I shall be for ever with the Lord. How glorious then my services, I shall sing the song of the Lamb for ever. I shall rehearse to listening saints the story of my salvation; and provoke attending spirits to join my praises. I shall sit at the feet of my Lord, secure, happy, ravished with unutterable joy everlastingly. Glorious expectation! But when, my soul, shall these things be? Why,

Why, the laſt enemy is death, and death is near at hand. It is but till death, my ſoul, and then all thy ſorrows ceaſe, all behind is glory. Be ſtedfaſt, my ſoul; thy hope is not in vain. O the love, the power of JESUS! JESUS ſave me; thou art able to ſave me every way; thou art all my ſalvation. Here I am, JESUS, I believe in thee, as the guide of my feet, as the Lord my righteouſneſs, as the Lord my ſtrength, as my full and final deliverer from all my enemies, I believe in thee; and renouncing all other help, unto thee I commend my ſoul."

Let us now collect together the whole, and ſee in one view what is the full force and meaning of theſe words, *I believe in* JESUS. I am a fallen creature, the offſpring of ſinful *Adam*, every way wretched and helpleſs, ignorant, guilty, impotent, and without hope in the future eternal world. But I know there is a Saviour, JESUS, who, I am well aſſured from the word of GOD, and from what I am told therein of his perſon, offices, and tranſactions, is fully able to help and ſave me. I have heard his free and full invitations, and being encouraged by them, I do, as my duty is, take him to be my Saviour, renouncing all hope from myſelf or any other beſide him. And accordingly I do hereby declare in the preſence of GOD, and of his Church, that I avouch JESUS for my Saviour; that I have no allowed dependence on my own wiſdom to inſtruct me in the things relative to the intereſts of my ſoul; but that I do implicitly give myſelf up to the words of CHRIST, deſiring to be directed into the knowledge of them by the illumination of his Spirit, and determining that how-

ever they be above my comprehenſion, or contrary to my pride and inclinations, I will receive them as the only rule of my faith and practice. I do farther confeſs, what I ſtedfaſtly believe, and whereon I reſt my ſoul, that in the obedience and death of JESUS there is hope alone for poor guilty ſinners like myſelf: I diſclaim all other confidence. I own, in this moſt public manner, that I have taken refuge in the Redeemer's righteouſneſs; and whatever boldneſs I now have to call upon GOD as a Father, or whatever proſpect of being with him as my GOD for ever, it has no other foundation, I deſire it may never, and I am fully perſuaded it can never have any other foundation than the obedience and death of JESUS. And as I have taken him to be my righteouſneſs, ſo alſo to be my ſtrength. I know myſelf inſufficient to any thing good. I aſcribe it to JESUS that I am not ſtill dead in treſpaſſes and ſins, that I have the leaſt grain of faith in GOD or ſpark of love towards him in me. I am perfectly ſatisfied that without him I can do nothing, and that his grace is ſufficient for me. Sincerely deſiring deliverance from all ſin, and the ſanctification of my whole ſpirit, ſoul and body to GOD's uſe and glory; I do and deſire always, to depend upon him to work this all-effectually upon me by his Holy Spirit, waiting for it in prayer, patience, and thankfulneſs. And finally, I avow him to be all my ſalvation for the eternal world, to perfect my ſoul in holineſs, to raiſe my body from the duſt, and to give me everlaſting life. In the full force and meaning of all which, and of whatever elſe lies within the ſcope of

of his saving power, I say here in the presence of you all, *I believe in Jesus.*

Now, brethren, can we adopt these words in this their proper meaning? Ah that we could all of us! how happy should we then be! For, verily, blessed is he that believeth; you see plainly that to believe in JESUS is the whole of christianity. Therefore to be without this faith, this practical faith, is but to have at best a name to live. Let us examine our hearts. Let us prove ourselves, whether we be in the faith. It will not fail to do us good one where or other; it will shew us our hypocrisy, if we be insincere; and if we be found faithful upon the trial, what comfort will it not afford us? May the great GOD, who made us for his glory, give us grace to believe in his Son JESUS CHRIST, to the praise of his name, and to our eternal salvation, through him the same JESUS CHRIST our Lord.

SERMON XIV.

ACTS xvi. 30, 31.

What must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.

IN speaking to the second branch of the Creed, relative to the Son, and his work of Redemption, I told you that it contained two parts. *First*, A profession of faith; *I believe in* JESUS. *Secondly*, A declaration

ration of the grounds upon which such belief doth stand. The former having been fully spoken to, we enter now on the latter. And the first thing, whereon we profess our belief of the sufficiency of JESUS to save us, is, that we know and are sure that he is *Christ*, duly set apart, and duly qualified for the office and work of a Saviour.

As to the meaning of the term *Christ*, it is no other than *Anointed*, which also the word *Messiah* signifies. But we must consider the force of the expression, as it belongs to JESUS. Now it is plain, that he is called CHRIST, in the New Testament, in an eminent and extraordinary way; so that, though others before him were indeed anointed, yet to none of them beside him is the title CHRIST applied, as it were for a name whereby to be ordinarily distinguished. And because of this peculiar eminency he is often called, *The Christ*; which manifestly implies, that he is such in a manner peculiar to himself; as also it denotes an expectation grounded upon promises, that such a CHRIST in that eminent way, of which all other anointed persons were but shadows and figures, should appear in the world.

Among the Jews, three sorts of persons, *Prophets*, *Priests* and *Kings*, were solemnly set apart to their respective offices by the ceremony of anointing with oil. In conformity with which, the Saviour, in whom the whole design of the Jewish constitution centred, in whom it was to have its intended issue, and who was to execute all these three offices, in the whole saving discharge of them, unto the church, must of necessity also be anointed thereunto. As a prophet, he was to reveal the whole will of GOD; as a priest, he was to make

make satisfaction and intercession for sin; as a King, he was to gather, govern, and protect his people. Upon his full discharge of which offices depends the whole success of his mediatorial undertaking, both as the glory of GOD and our salvation are concerned in it.

Consider the peculiarity of this undertaking, and you will see the necessity of his being authoritatively appointed unto it, as also furnished for it. The matter stands thus: Man by *Adam*'s sin was fallen from GOD. Hereby, on the one side, divine Majesty had suffered an insult, which could not be passed over, consistently with the glory due thereto, without a reparation made to it, and which, whether it should be made at all in behalf of the offender, and of what kind it should be, lay intirely in the will of GOD, the injured party; and, on the other part, through the same apostasy, there was such a departure as amounted to downright enmity against GOD; man was as unwilling to come to any terms of accommodation with his Maker, as he was unable to find out any; or should he have found them, to perform the condition of them, in any manner that would at once comport with GOD's glory and his own salvation. Perfectly to heal this breach was to be the business of a Mediator; and you find his business was to make GOD satisfaction for the wrong done him; and to prevail with man to accept of an offer of peace made by GOD, in consideration of that satisfaction, and to return to his place and duty. In which views it is manifest, that he must be duly authorised to make a satisfaction for the offender which GOD would ac-

cept, (for it must needs be made according to GOD's pleasure, and in such a way as he could be content with) and then, not only must he be authorised to make this satisfaction, but also in GOD's Name to declare, and publish GOD's having accepted it, and his inviting, and commanding all men to come unto it; nor is this all, he must have authority also to confer the whole benefits of this satisfaction on such as should seek to have the blessing of it. But, not only must he be thus endued with proper authority on GOD's part, he must have also a power to work on the hearts of men, to bring them to see the misery of their apostate state, to relieve them from, and encourage them against their fears that must necessarily rise upon such a discovery, by the application of his satisfaction; and finally, to change their hearts unto a love of GOD, who is naturally the object of their hatred, into a complacency in him, and chearfulness in serving him. All this is in fewer words, he must be a Priest, to make satisfaction for sinners to the glory of GOD, and an Intercessor, through whom they may have free access unto him, without disgrace done to his most holy Majesty by their unworthiness, and without discouragement on their part, because of it; he must be a Prophet, to declare, in the name of GOD, the salvation he hath procured; to convince men in their hearts of their absolute want of it, and of its sufficiency to relieve them: he must be a King, to confer authoritatively this salvation upon all that humbly sue for it, to defend them from their enemies, and to maintain a spiritual dominion in their hearts. Upon these considerations it appears, that he must be

duly

duly authorised for his mediatorial work, and also duly qualified. That he was both the one and the other, both solemnly consecrated unto it, and fully fitted for it, being anointed King, Priest and Prophet for this very purpose, you declare when you say, *I believe in Jesus the Christ.* Wherein you profess your belief of these two things relative to, and implied in his anointing, as together constituting him an authorised, qualified, and ample Mediator for the exercise of his Kingly, Prophetic, and Sacerdotal work, and the fulfilment of GOD's design, respecting his own glory, in that transaction.

First, That he was solemnly consecrated, inaugurated, and set apart to this work, according to the purpose of GOD before the worlds were, and according to the tenor of the covenant of redemption, by the express designation and open declaration of the Father, whereby he was publicly sealed and invested Prophet, Priest and King, and GOD's commissioning him thereto, with full power and authority, was avowed and declared. That he was thus consecrated hereunto you have been taught to believe from GOD's testimony to this very thing, as by the many wonderful works that he wrought by him, and in confirmation of his mission, so especially, by that open declaration, at the time of his baptism, *when the Spirit like a dove descended and lighted upon him; and lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.* A testimony which our Lord himself afterwards refers to as fully declarative of his commission, and as being nothing less than GOD's seal put unto it, for the conviction of the world, that he came fully

impowered: *Labour for that meat which endureth unto eternal life, which the Son of man shall give unto you; for him hath God the Father sealed.*

Secondly, Besides his consecration, you believe also his qualification, as the other thing implied in his anointing. And this is his receiving in his human nature the fulness of the *Holy Ghost*, *which*, you are expressly assured, *was given to him without measure*, John iii. 34. Hereby he was furnished with every gift and every grace, that could possibly be needful to the discharge of all and every part of his work, as to what related to his human nature therein, to offer himself freely, and without spot unto God, to declare the whole will of God, and to attend upon the ministrations thereof with the demonstrative illumination of the Spirit, to direct, assist, sanctify, and build up his people unto a meetness for the heavenly inheritance. In short, as he was constituted, and consecrated to the office of a Saviour by the designation and declaration of the Father, so was he by him furnished and qualified by the unlimited bestowment of every gift and grace of the Spirit necessary thereto. And in both these together consists his anointing. From the nature of his office, as one who was to mediate between God and his apostate creatures, neither of them could be wanting; his consecration and his qualification must go hand in hand. Had he not acted in God's name, and been invested with his authority, his qualifications and actions would have been without divine warrant; and had he been only authorised, and not furnished, he had been unequal to the work he was sent to perform. Happy for us that

that his commiſſion and qualification are ſo ample; and that we have the teſtimony of ſcripture, (I might ſay alſo of experience) that our Saviour JESUS is fully authoriſed, and fitted to teach us as our Prophet; to atone and intercede for us, as our Prieſt; and to rule and defend us, as our King.

But now, Brethren, we may know all this, and yet come utterly ſhort of the full meaning and purpoſe of this word, *Chriſt*, here in the Creed. The perſon here ſpeaking is ſuppoſed to have entered into the deſign of this unction or anointing, and in ſome meaſure to have his heart and conduct in conformity with it. Does he ſay, I believe JESUS was ſolemnly authoriſed and amply fitted to teach me the will of GOD, that I ſhould pay no manner of regard to it, remain in ignorance of it through my own careleſſneſs, or proudly diſpute the truth of what he ſays? Does the believer declare, I know JESUS was conſtituted and qualified to make atonement for ſin, that I ſhould make no manner of uſe of that atonement, either ſtanding upon my own righteouſneſs, or never ſeriouſly conſidering my ſinfulneſs and miſery, that I may ſeek the benefit of his? Is JESUS, does he ſay, ordained a King, and furniſhed with every kingly requiſite, that I ſhould remain ſerving my luſts, oppoſing his kingdom, and growing daily more ripe for deſtruction in the increaſing hardneſs and impenitency of my heart? Theſe you ſee are flat contradictions to a true belief of the unction of JESUS unto his offices. The very reverſe is the true ſpirit of faith. And when the real believer ſays, "I believe in JESUS the Anointed," he takes comfort from the perſuaſion, which

the assured consecration and qualification of JESUS give him, of his power to save; and honestly desires, that he may partake of his saving help in all those offices unto which he is thus anointed.

You see then the full purport and meaning of the word CHRIST, as it stands connected with JESUS, must be this; "I believe in JESUS, as my only Saviour," (for it has been observed that the word JESUS, must be carried forward to every point following in this second branch of the Creed) "and I believe in him as my Saviour, to deliver me from darkness, guilt and sin, among other reasons afterwards to be mentioned, first of all for this, because I know him to be CHRIST, designed, and set apart by GOD, and fully furnished for his office. And seeing GOD hath appointed, and fitted him to be a Prophet, Priest, and King to me, I do desire always to give honour unto GOD's appointment herein; and, at the same time, to ascribe all the glory I can to my Saviour, thus constituted and sealed by the Father, as well as furnished by the fulness of the Holy Ghost, by yielding myself with all reverence, humility and submission unto his teaching, righteousness and grace; holding it my greatest present blessing to partake of his unction in all these respects, and desiring, and designing to wait perseveringly upon him in all his appointed ways, that I may continually *receive grace for grace out of his fulness*; till, in the faithful discharge of all his offices towards me, he bring me to his everlasting kingdom. And this is my meaning, when I make my profession and say, *I believe in Jesus Christ.*"

Well now, and what say our hearts to this? Is this the real sentiment we have within us? Do we honestly desire to be thus minded towards JESUS, considered as the Anointed of GOD? I will endeavour to shew a little how you may know if this is not your case; and then I will help you to see how far it is your case; and conclude with certain encouraging thoughts arising from the unction of JESUS.

I. I will endeavour a little to shew you how you may know if this is not your case. And this most certainly it is not,

First, If you have never deeply found the want of a Saviour; for then it is impossible you should have received him whom GOD has sent to you with full authority and ample qualification. Now of such there are doubtless very many in the world, and, without question, in this congregation. Christ found many of that stamp in his days, people who were whole, and did not need him who was come to seek and save that which was lost. If you have been satisfying yourself with comparisons, if you have been staying yourself upon an outward decency, if you have never entered into the depths of your own heart, and are a stranger, whether to the fact of your fallen nature, or to the evil of it, and the danger of that estate; if you have not been brought to inquire, what you should do to be saved from an in-felt experience of your exceeding vileness, and with a real concern in respect of which every earthly thing appeared to you worthy of no consideration; if you have gone on with the multitude, and thought nothing of these

ſerious matters, leaving them to viſionaries and enthuſiaſts, as you were ready to account ſuch as were ſeriouſly concerned for their eternal intereſts: in any of theſe caſes, it is moſt manifeſt you have not come to JESUS the Anointed; and the longer you have lived, the more have you added to the prejudices of your heart againſt CHRIST's word, to the obſtinacy of your heart againſt his law, and to the ſize of your guilt againſt the day of recompence unto ſuch as obey not the goſpel. You who have not found the want of a Saviour, can never have received him as the CHRIST of GOD. Nor,

2. Though you have ſeemingly found the want of him in the power of an enlightened, and ſomething awakened conſcience, but have not received him, as GOD has ſent and furniſhed him, to be a Prophet, Prieſt and King to you, ſtill you cannot ſay truly, "I believe in JESUS the CHRIST." Nothing in the world can be plainer than this. For only ſee. Who is your Teacher? What, CHRIST? Does his Word ſtand really for every thing with you, and outweigh every thing, the cuſtom of the world, the wiſdom of the world, the learning of the world; ſo that, if that ſays it, you make no great account of what never ſo many can ſay againſt it, running directly counter to all that run contrary to your Bible, and bringing every thing to the law and the teſtimony, to prove it whether it be right or wrong? Is Chriſt your Prieſt? Are you crying unto him, "Lord, ſave me; Lord, plead for me; for I am vile, I am unworthy, I cannot ſtand before this holy LORD GOD; I am nothing but ſin and miſery, and yet I would not be caſt out of his preſence;

presence; that were very hell, and infinitely worse than any thing I could suffer here?" What, is this your daily, your importunate cry? And is CHRIST your King? What, do you own no King but JESUS? Are all your lusts put in subjection under his feet, and do you loyally endeavour they may be kept so, not your most convenient, most pleasing sin excepted? Is it your constant cry, that he may keep you from all iniquity, may sanctify you wholly, and maintain an undisturbed dominion in you, and over you? Can you say this? If you can, you are not the person I am speaking to. But if you cannot, and you know nothing of all I have been declaring, it is plain the unction of JESUS has not reached unto you, and that you do not believe in him as your CHRIST. But,

II. I would shew you how far you have received him as GOD's Anointed. It is supposed, you have found the want of him in his offices, and that you are so far persuaded of his sufficiency as to have submitted yourself to him, to be taught, saved, and ruled by him; that your case therefore is not like that of those I have just been speaking to. You are in the number of true believers, and would know, how far you are gone in receiving JESUS as the CHRIST of GOD. You may know it two ways.

1. By the honour and reverence you pay him, considered as bearing GOD's authority towards you, that is, as being consecrated by GOD to be a Prophet, Priest and King unto you. How far do you reverence GOD's authority in the offices of JESUS? I will tell you how far. It is just as far as you hear him speaking

speaking to you with a humble, meek, attentive and teachable spirit; just as far as you dare not question his merits, and dare not trust on your own; just as far as you find his commands to be decisive, and submitted to without gainsaying, at all events. For as the Unbeliever shews his irreverence of GOD's authority in the person of the Anointed by paying him no regard in the offices, so, you may be sure, the more you do the contrary, the more your soul is brought into a submissive and lowly estate before him, so much the more you honour him, as the sealed of the Father. Then,

2. You may also know your measure herein, by the use you make of JESUS, considered as qualified to be a Prophet, Priest and King to you. The more diligent you are in hearkening to the words of his mouth, keeping them in your heart, pondering upon them, and waiting, in all prayer, for his Spirit to enlighten you in the knowledge of them; the more frequent, ready and confident you are in applying to his obedience and intercession under the sight of all your sins; the more resolute and constant you are in suing for his grace to keep you in temptations, to rid you from corruptions, to subdue in you the whole body of sin, to maintain and increase in you the blessed graces of Faith, Hope and Charity; so much the more you evidently receive him, as qualified by GOD to be a Prophet, Priest, and King towards you. There is no disputing so plain a thing on one side or other. It is our practice must shew our progress. In the measure we thus use CHRIST, we receive him in his offices. And let us beware that neither Satan be

allowed

allowed to make us deny a plain matter of fact on one side, nor self-flattery prevail with us to believe a lie on the other.

And now, my Friends, we see how the matter stands with us, in respect of CHRIST's unction. As our case is, let us take encouragement to come unto JESUS, they who are far off, and they who are nigh, from this comfortable and delightful thought, that he is CHRIST, the anointed of GOD, the commissioned and qualified Prophet, and Priest, and King. Sirs, in these offices there is full supply of all our wants; there is not one case of any poor sinner that is not here provided for. I defy, in the Name of JESUS, Guilt to make any charge, Unbelief to raise any objections, the Habit of Sin to set up any claim, the Law to denounce any sentence, Death, Judgment, and Hell together to present any terrors, which JESUS is not able to remove. O, my Brethren, it was even because we were thus guilty, sinful, miserable, ignorant, helpless, that JESUS was anointed to be a Saviour. What stands in our way to glory? It is guilt, it is sin, it is blindness, it is Satan. Why here is the Christ, the constituted, the qualified Prophet, Priest, and King; and therefore anointed, because we needed such an one. What mean we then to loiter? Who can be against us? GOD is for us; it is manifest, our CHRIST is a complete Saviour. Let not then your hands hang down in any case. Come to the Saviour; the Anointed of the LORD. Why will ye stand off from him, who is come to save you? What, because ye have long resisted and refused to obey him? What,

What, because ye are very guilty? What, because Satan has long had dominion over you? Still I say, Come, for JESUS is CHRIST. And O what a comfort to every believing soul, that GOD has thus commissioned and qualified JESUS! such a Mediator between GOD and man; so appointed of the Father; so furnished by the Spirit: such a Teacher, King, and Priest! LORD, *to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we know and are sure that thou art* CHRIST. O how joyfully should we say these words of *Peter!* How confident should our faith be, when we say one before another, *I believe in Jesus the Christ.*

SERMON XV.

ACTS xvi. 30, 31.

What must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.

IN explaining the second branch of the Creed, we have already considered, what it is to believe in JESUS; and have begun to illustrate the grounds upon which our firm confidence in him, as our all-sufficient Saviour, is fixed, and stands unshaken; to wit, in the first place, because he is CHRIST, anointed to this work by the Father. The second thing upon which

we build our faith in JESUS as our ſufficient Saviour, comes now to be ſpoken to, in opening the words that follow, *His only Son.*

In order to the explication of this point, it is altogether needful to obſerve, that the divinity of our LORD is not a matter of ſpeculation, or a mere doctrinal poſition, but that on which the ſufficiency of JESUS as a Saviour does moſt eminently depend. If a Saviour be wanted, it is neceſſary that the perſon who undertakes the work ſhould be fit for it; nor can any, who are truly ſenſible of the want of ſalvation in this fallen ſtate of ours, poſſibly betruſt themſelves to one that offers it to them, until they be ſurely convinced, on good grounds, that he is able to give it them. If the Saviour be inſufficient, the attempt fails; and unleſs the Sinner be perſuaded of the Saviour's ſufficiency, he cannot depend upon him. You ſee therefore how far the point before us is from being a ſpeculation; that the inquiry into the truth of it ſhould be entered into with the concern which its importance to our ſouls gives it; and that they who, incompetently ſenſible of the want of a Saviour, do addreſs themſelves to ſearch thereinto, muſt neceſſarily either receive it as a mere notion, or reject it as abſurd and impoſſible. The perſon who is really ſenſible of his fallen ſinful eſtate, and duly concerned about being ſet at liberty from the alarming apprehenſions which it has begotten in him reſpecting a future world, is the only one that can profitably inquire into this myſterious truth, "that JESUS is the Son of GOD;" and it is his belief of that which can alone ſupport him in his preſent circumſtances with

with confidence, hope, and peace. If JESUS be *the only-begotten of the Father*, his mediatorial sufficiencies cannot be questioned, and he must needs be able to save to the uttermost. It remains only, that the self-condemned sinner be satisfied he is so; and when he has assuredly learnt this, not from man, but from that Word which he is incontestably convinced is GOD'S, he grows easy, and without the least hesitation of heart cries out, *Truly in the Lord have I righteousness. Now I know, and am sure, that all who believe in thee shall not perish, but have everlasting life.*

To come therefore to the plain force of this expression, as it stands here in the Creed, which amounts to this, "I believe in JESUS, because he is the only Son of the Father." And when I say this, I intend these three things.

First, That I verily believe him to be the only Son of the Father.

Secondly, That since I know him to be so, I cannot doubt of his power to save.

Thirdly, And that therefore I do both confidently rely upon him, and also humbly yield myself up unto him, to be saved by him in all respects.

First, I verily believe him to be the only Son of the Father. And for this I have the plainest evidences, and such as give me the fullest satisfaction, however the coexistence of the three Persons in the one undivided divine essence, is above my comprehension; and however mysterious is the generation of this only-begotten Son from all eternity of the Father. For I find him continually called in scripture *the Son*,

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the only-begotten Son, the Son of God, the only-begotten of the Father; and I am taught to understand these expressions in the most proper, and simple sense, by very many other expressions which distinguish him from all others that are called sons, and plainly stile him GOD; declaring, that *He was in the beginning with God, and was God*; *that he was in the form of God*; *that he is the true God*; and setting him out as the object of faith and worship, together with the Father and the Holy Ghost. In conformity with which accounts of his divine nature, I find both the works and perfections of divinity ascribed to this only-begotten Son, who is expressly said to be the *Creator* of all things; inasmuch as *the world was made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made*; to be the *Preserver* of all things, forasmuch as *it is he who is upholding all things by the word of his power*; to be the *living God, in him was life*; to be *Omnipotent*, seeing, *whatsoever things the Father doth, the same doth the Son likewise*; to be *Omnipresent*, for *where two or three are met together in my Name, there*, says he, *am I in the midst of them*; to be, finally, *a searcher of hearts*; for *he knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man, for he knew what was in man:* and more expressly does he assert of himself, *I am he who searcheth the reins and the heart, and I will give unto every one according to their works*, Rev. xi. 23. Finding therefore these works and properties ascribed unto him, which I know nevertheless to be peculiar to GOD, I am farther determined in what sense I am to take those expressions, which speak of him as the only-begotten of the Father,

ther, and as GOD; not the same *Person* with the Father, for then there would be neither Father, nor Son; and yet I see evidently of the same *essence*, and *perfections* with him; so that, unless I should say, there are two GODS, I cannot deny him and the Father to be one. Nor do I find any thing to lessen my belief of his being the proper and eternal Son of GOD, when I consider him in his office-capacity of Redeemer, assuming our nature, and thereby becoming JESUS. On the contrary, I see him putting forth such acts of divinity, even in his estate of humiliation, as sufficiently testify to his being the Son of GOD. Struck with the inconteſtable evidence, one could not help crying out, "*Rabbi, thou art the Son of God*;" and another, "*My Lord and my God*;" and two others, in the name of all, "*We know and are sure that thou art Christ, the Son of the living God.*"—"*And we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.*" I see him manifested to be the Son of GOD, by all the riches of wisdom and knowledge that shone forth in him; by his mighty words and works; by the submission which all creatures, when he pleased, were enforced to pay him; by a thousand circumstances in his life; yet more by the manner of his death; more still by his raising himself from the dead; most of all by his actual and evident dominion at the right hand of GOD; from whence I behold him exerting such acts of power upon the hearts of men, and especially my own; watching over his church with such infinite love, directing every the minutest circumstance, attending all the members of it with such absolute wis-

dom,

dom, and displaying such acts of divine power; that, upon the whole, I am still more convincingly satisfied, by his mediatorial transactions, of his being in very deed the Son of GOD.—And therefore,

Secondly, Knowing him to be the only Son of GOD, I cannot doubt of his power to save. I see evidently, that salvation must be the work of GOD, who alone can open the blind eyes of apostate minds, alone can justify the ungodly, and by whose alone power it is, that souls spiritually dead can be raised to spiritual life, and restored to the divine image and likeness again, that body of sin, which now so dreadfully works in them, being utterly destroyed. To shine into the heart with supernatural and divine light, to justify the ungodly, to sanctify the unholy, must be GOD's works: for they are appropriated to GOD alone. And here I see GOD himself effecting them by the only Son, who has graciously condescended to this task, and having taken our nature into his own, he himself, in that union, is become a Prophet, Priest, and King, for our full salvation. Can I dispute then his sufficiency in this mediatorial character? Not while I know him to be the only-begotten of the Father. That one word silences all objection. To say, that he is GOD come to save us, and yet to say, that he is not able to save us, is a blasphemy I tremble at. Can I say that he made all things, and at the same time question if he be able to restore all things? Does he uphold the world by his power, and yet has he not might enough to save a worm? Did he come down from heaven to work salvation, and shall his undertaking fail? What should, what could frustrate it?

it? Was he unable to answer the demands of infinite justice? What, when the blood which purchased the church was the blood of GOD? Was he ignorant of the counsels of the Father's will, when *from all eternity he was by him, as one brought up with him*; when *he was in the bosom of the Father*; when *in him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge?* Should the opposition of sin, Satan, men, death, hell hinder? O how sufficient above all such difficulties is this GOD our Saviour? Here lies my chief ground of faith, I know JESUS to be the only Son of GOD, and, with the Father and the Spirit, one GOD. Knowing this, I avow the merit of all he did and suffered; I avouch every gracious word of his mouth to be *yea* and *amen*; his promises to be unchangeable; his charge to be divine; I proclaim him mighty to save, though a most rebellious nature, the power of the grave, the artifice of Satan, and the whole force of earthly allurement, interest, ease, custom, reproach, stand in the way. All-sufficiency is in JESUS, because he is the only Son of the Father. And hereupon,

Thirdly, I do solemnly declare, that, knowing him to be an all-sufficient Saviour, because the only-begotten Son of GOD, I do rely upon him, in all respects, with the fullest confidence; and humbly yield myself up to him, to be saved by him in all his offices. I know his power, and do not distrust him in any wise; but leaning assuredly on what he has said, I do not fear condemnation, though I am a sinner; nor question his perfecting the work of holiness which he has begun in me, though I am so full of corruption; I look forward to the day of his appearing with boldness,

boldneſs, and wait for it with longing expectation; I lay my hand on everlaſting life as my portion, and tread death and hell under my feet, as riſen with my incarnate GOD; I defy every enemy preſent and to come, and ſay unto the Lord, *Thou art my God.* I know whom I have believed, and being fully perſuaded that he is very GOD, I have committed and do commit my whole ſelf to his keeping, humbly and reverently waiting for his ſaving help from day to day, that he may ſhew me more and more of his divine glory and unſearchable love, to the end that I may rejoice more abundantly in the efficacy of his obedience and death, and may be changed into the ſame image from glory to glory, by his Almighty Spirit. And this my confidence in him, and ſubmiſſion to him, I mean to declare, when I ſay I believe in JESUS *his only Son.*

Let us come now to ſome neceſſary conſiderations ariſing from this point. As,

Firſt, We ſhould obſerve the peculiar influence which our believing JESUS to be, in his heavenly nature, the Son of GOD, has unto our faith in him as a ſufficient Saviour. I ſay the peculiar influence: for though indeed all the grounds upon which this faith ſtands, and which are particularly pointed out in this branch of the Creed, be abſolutely neceſſary unto that faith, ſo that not one of them can be diſbelieved conſiſtently therewith; yet in the preſent point there is this peculiar and eminent, that it is the life of all the reſt, giving merit and efficacy to all the Mediator's tranſactions, and without which he could not be that Saviour he is. The divinity of JESUS ſtanding

confirmed,

confirmed, there is a power in his offices, life, death, resurrection, exaltation, and approaching coming, which faith can take hold of with confidence. But take this away, and what remains? What great difference between him and that other mediator, *Moses*, who prefigured him? What difference in their teaching? JESUS could only reveal more of GOD's will than his forerunner; but to teach the heart, *Moses* and he would be equally insufficient. What differences in their sacrifices? There was no merit in those of *Moses*, to take away sin, neither, in this case, would there be in that of JESUS, to satisfy the demands of infinite injured justice. And as to dominion, what power in JESUS more than *Moses*, to know, convert, and govern the hearts of men; to sanctify their corrupted nature, or to defeat, and over-rule the secret or open attempts of the devil, if he be not GOD? Take away the divinity of JESUS, and you cut off his right hand that he cannot help you; and therewith all your confidence in him as able to help you. Indeed, if you are not sensible of your fallen state, a Saviour who is not God may serve your turn; if it be not absurd to call him a Saviour, when you find no saving work for him to do; and when from him, as you find not that you want any thing else, so you expect nothing more than that he should come commissioned from GOD to fix a perfect system of morals, and to declare beforehand what the issue will be of your conforming to or neglecting them. And truly this is the way of such as deny the divinity of CHRIST. They deny, or diminish to a mere nothing, the corruption of our nature. Hence they know not what

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the real state of man now is, nor consequently the need of divine illumination, remission of sins, and a change of heart; so being unacquainted with what indeed made a Saviour necessary, they can have no dependence upon him for the effectual discharge of his offices to them; and of course, when they set themselves to determine about the divinity of CHRIST, can only judge of it as a matter of mere speculation and orthodoxy. They begin at the wrong end; and, while they know not themselves, are void of that spirit of meekness which prepares the mind for divine discoveries: and no wonder if they quarrel with that doctrine of the Trinity as unintelligible and incomprehensible, which to those who truly know the want of salvation, is incontestably evident in the scriptures, and the whole ground of their confidence, hope, and triumph.

Secondly, We should observe the exceeding sinfulness and danger of a state of unbelief. By a state of unbelief is meant that condition of soul wherein people, through the hardness of their hearts, do either carelessly neglect, or wilfully refuse the gospel. Brethren, are there no souls here in this condition? If ye all know yourselves to be such sinners, that ye dare not look up to GOD but through JESUS CHRIST, and are yet putting forth the strength given to you that he may be a Saviour unto you, concerned about this more than all things besides, then there are none such in this assembly. But alas! is it so? Would to GOD it were so. O what a happy day would it then be for all of us! I mistake myself greatly, if all the things in the world together would give me such happiness. Ah, Sirs! ye are committed to my care; your souls are betrusted

unto me; and can I be eaſy, while I ſee any of you out of the road of heaven? Why will ye be angry with me? Do I wrong you by wiſhing you happy? happy beyond all that tongue can ſpeak or heart can think, eternally, glorioufly happy; ſeated on the hills of paradiſe, and every ſoul of you with a crown of glory on his head, and I among and amidſt you, my dear people? What ſhall I do; ſhall I leave you to yourſelves? What, ſhall I betray your ſouls, and leave you quietly in the hands of the devil? How would you then curſe me at laſt, how juſtly would you then curſe me, and call for vengeance on my unfaithful head? "This was our miniſter! He did not warn us; he did not tell us of our danger; he did not care what became of our ſouls; he forbore to tell us plainly what the end would be, through fear of our diſpleaſure. Juſtice, JESUS, thou righteous Judge, we demand juſtice upon him for our periſhed ſouls through his cowardice and neglect." Ah, Sirs! I would willingly ſee you all at the right hand of JESUS. I would not, no, I would not have one word delivered by me to any ſoul of you riſe up in judgment againſt you. What ſhall I ſay? Are ye all believers? gracious GOD, that thy word ſhould have been preached ſo many years together in this place to ſo little purpoſe! What? All believers? The marks of an unbelieving ſtate to be found on none? Whence then ſo much drunkenneſs, and idle company-keeping? whence ſo much covetouſneſs and carking care after the world? whence ſo much pleaſure and vanity? I ſay ſo much pleaſure and vanity; for ſince I knew you, you are grown exceedingly addicted to pleaſure and vanity. It is but a very few years ago that this place was remarkable

markable for gravity in dreſs; but is it ſo at preſent? You know it is not. There are many of you that ſpoil one another. And I ſee many of the lower ſort who are as fond as their betters of making a figure this way. Now faith is certainly a ſerious thing. I wiſh you would all try your hearts. While we are following the vain pomp and glory of the world, the covetous deſires of the ſame, or the carnal deſires of the fleſh, can we have faith? No, it cannot be. And yet I muſt tell you, that to be in a ſtate of unbelief is terrible. Judge of it only from this word of the apoſtle, *If the word ſpoken by angels was ſtedfaſt, and every tranſgreſſion and diſobedience received a juſt recompence of reward, how ſhall we eſcape if we neglect ſo great ſalvation?* And again, *For if they eſcaped not who refuſed him that ſpake on earth, much more ſhall not we eſcape, if we turn away from him that ſpeaketh from heaven,* that is, from the only Son of GOD. GOD ſaid, *I will ſend my Son unto them, it may be they will reverence my Son.* But when they would not, then it follows, *What ſhall God do to them?* He ſhall *miſerably deſtroy them.* But,

Thirdly, We ſhould all of us honour the Son more than we do. His honour and our profit are inſeparable. Had we higher thoughts of his glory, as the only-begotten of the Father in a mediatorial capacity, we ſhould not be ſo apt to miſtruſt him as we do, through remaining unbelief, becauſe of our ſinfulneſs, the power of our enemies, the depth of our corruptions, the darkneſs of our own minds, and the ſuggeſtions of the devil. To honour the Son is to exalt him in our hearts as an all-ſufficient Sa-

viour. This is his proper glory, as Mediator. And the way to it is, to keep closer to him, to think oftner of him, and to behold, and look more abundantly upon his glory as the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. Nor shall our labour herein be without reward. Our faith will grow more lively; our hope of beholding his glory in heaven more ardent; our souls will be more peaceful; our fears of death die away; our love of this world be mortified. *Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?* There is the conquering faith. Strive hard for it. Let JESUS dwell in our hearts, and our hearts will be changed from day to day; see therefore that ye pay increasing honour to JESUS *the Son of God.*

SERMON XVI.

ACTS XVI. 30, 31.

What must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.

I Am now to speak of JESUS, *as our Lord*, which will afford us another important ground of our faith in him. And the addition of his being our Lord will be found, in connection with what he has been already seen to be, a substantial foundation of all confidence in JESUS. As CHRIST, he is amply furnished for the work of salvation; as *the only Son*, his

his sufficiency in that work is incontestable; and being our Lord he acts therein with sovereign authority.

In treating this point we must needs proceed as with the foregoing, considering it in a practical manner, inasmuch as JESUS's being our Lord cannot be a thing of speculation, but that on which our confidence in him, as acting with all authority, is indisputably determined. That he is so, that he transacts all his mediatorial work with absolute power and plenary authority we all profess to believe, as a sure ground of our confidence in his salvation, when we say, *I believe in Jesus our Lord.* Wherein we declare thus much,

First, I believe JESUS to be Lord of all things by his nature, as the only Son of GOD.

Secondly, Therefore I believe him qualified to be, what he is, Lord of all things by constitution, as the son of man.

Thirdly, As the son of man I know that he hath exercised, and believe that he both doth and will exercise an absolute dominion over all things. Wherefore,

Fourthly, I humbly subject myself to his saving power in all respects. I do confidently trust upon JESUS as authoritatively executing all his offices. I quietly wait upon him for the performance of all salvation to me. And as the subject of his dominion I desire to own and honour him as my Lord and the Lord of all things, by a dutiful use of myself and my gifts, by a public profession of his name in the world, and by keeping my body and spirit for him to death and judgment.

First, I believe JESUS to be Lord of all things by his nature, as the only Son of GOD. For as I know him to be the proper Son of the Father, and see all the works and perfections which are proper to GOD ascribed to him; so I find him bearing those titles, which as they are incommunicable, so also expressive of absolute independency, and consequently of the dependence of all things upon GOD. Thus in the Old Testament he is frequently called *Jehovah* (which signifies the root and fountain of all existence or very being itself) and that in such passages where the Father and the Son being equally stiled by this very name Jehovah, there is no room left me to doubt that the Son is Jehovah as well as and with the Father. Thus I read in *Zech.* x. 12. *I will strengthen them in the Lord* (in the original it is Jehovah) *and they shall walk up and down in his name, saith the Lord*, (Jehovah). And in *Hos.* i. 7. *I* (Jehovah) *will have mercy upon the house of Judah, and will save them by the Lord* (Jehovah) *their God, and will not save them by bow nor by sword.* And in the New Testament he is known to me by the same title universally, *the Lord* being a name there continually given him; while also it is not disputed, that the *Lord* and *Jehovah* are but the same word in two different languages, which expresses that independency of GOD, by which he must needs have all creatures in dependence upon him, holding dominion over all things. Wherefore,

Secondly, Knowing him to be Lord of all things by nature, as the Son of GOD, the Creator and upholder of all, I do believe him qualified to be what he is, the Lord of all things by constitution, as the Son of man.

man. Redemption I know to be a work beyond the power of any ſon of man, who is not alſo the ſon of GOD: but when I ſee *upon whoſe ſhoulders the government is laid*, even upon that Son of man who is aſſumed into union with the *mighty* GOD, *the wonderful counſellor*, I ſee it placed where it belongs, and in hands that are able to ſupport it with honour, and to exerciſe it with power. And accordingly as I know him thus qualified for dominion, ſo I believe him to be conſtituted Lord of all things, as Mediator, by the expreſs appointment of the Father; whereof I am aſſured in numberleſs ſcriptures, where I am told, *God hath in theſe laſt days ſpoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things*, according to what was declared before concerning him. *The Lord ſaid unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footſtool.* Of this grant I hear him ſpeaking himſelf; *All things are delivered unto me of my Father.* And again, *The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hands*; and the Apoſtles triumphing in the truth of this dominion, *God hath made this ſame Jeſus whom ye have crucified both Lord and Chriſt; and God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name, which is above every name, that at the name of Jeſus every knee ſhould bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue ſhould confeſs that Jeſus Chriſt is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.* Here is plainly declared to me the extenſiveneſs of his dominion, as it is alſo yet more fully in other places: *He hath ſet him at his own right hand in heavenly places, far above all principality and power, and every name that is named,*

not only in this world, but also in that which is to come. Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands. Thou hast put all things in subjection under him; for in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. Neither do I find this dominion of JESUS less ample as to continuance, than complete in largeness; *Of his kingdom there shall be no end, his throne is for ever and ever, his dominion an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away; and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.* And,

Thirdly, As I find him to have been thus constituted Lord of all things as the Son of man, so I find farther that he actually exercised the dominion that was committed to him, while he was upon earth, in an authoritative manner, though not with that fulness of power and dominion wherewith, in reward of his death, he was invested after his resurrection, when GOD put all things under his feet. His taking possession of the kingdom in the whole glory and exercise of it, was reserved to the solemn day of his session at the right hand of GOD: but yet he exercised his dominion in a royal manner, and with supreme authority while he was upon earth. Thus I hear him saying to the winds and sea, *Peace, be still; and immediately there was a great calm.* I hear him commanding the lame to walk, and suddenly they take up their bed. I find him giving sight to the blind at a word; and I hear him speaking to the dead, and they arise. Nay I behold him exerting his dominion in such acts as are more proper to the nature of his kingdom, as a *spiri-*

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tual government; he cast out devils at a word, and impowered his disciples to do the same. *Master, even the devils are subject to us through thy name.* He said to one and another, *Thy sins are forgiven thee*; that it might be known he *had power on earth to forgive sins.* He exerted acts of divine power upon the hearts of men, *Follow me*; turned the hearts of some; and such a majesty was felt in his preaching that such as would not believe could not help confessing, *never man spake like this man.* But his whole dominion was reserved till his inauguration at the right hand of the throne of GOD. Then he wrought to make his power to be known. I see the exalted JESUS to be Lord of all things. Lord of gifts; what an effusion of them was there at Pentecost! And of graces; what zeal, what boldness, did the cowardly fishermen obtain in a moment! Then he proved himself the Lord of mens hearts. How many were made obedient to the faith in one day, of those very persons upon whom the word of JESUS in person had proved inefficacious! I see the wisdom of man, and the prince of darkness bowing every where before the throne of JESUS. I see attending angels executing his commissions, when he will save the life of an apostle, and the soul of a jailer. I see death disarmed of all his terrors, the world of all its power, while suffering saints look up to heaven and say, *Lord Jesus, receive my Spirit.* What is become of the rage of men, the awe of councils, the dread of judgment-seats? The power of JESUS has disarmed them all. His servants are made strong by his arm, *they* only triumph while their judges are confounded. How

did the number of disciples increase, Gentiles as well as Jews became obedient to the faith, and opposition only served to illustrate the reign of Immanuel! And to this day is his arm shortened? Every where there are they who own the power of JESUS, who confess him mighty to save upon their own experience. "What power hath he not exerted upon my heart?" (doth our Believer say) "I was blind, and he opened my eyes. I was dead in sin, and he quickned me. I was inslaved by Satan, and he set me free. He carried me in his arms, like a lamb of the flock, nor suffered the roaring lion to make me his prey. He taught me to go. He held up my goings. He would not suffer me to be tempted above my strength. He gently raised me up when I fell. He brought me into a place of liberty, and spake comfortably to me. He brought down my deadly enemies, sin, and the world, under me. He has given me a glorious hope, and I know that when this tabernacle shall be dissolved, he hath prepared for me a house, *eternal in the heavens.* He hath taken away the sting of death, and hath caused me to wait till my change comes. But what, am I the only living instance of the almighty power of JESUS? Who then are these that walk in the light, that are turned unto GOD, that are renouncing all and following JESUS, that have their hope full of immortality, upon whom the devil, the world, and the flesh have no power to hurt them? Who has begotten these? who keeps them? who sets their faces like flint that they are not ashamed? Thine is the kingdom, exalted JESUS! I see, I own it; and of thy dominion there is no end. We wait for thy second coming with power and great glory, to put all thine enemies and

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ours under thy feet for ever, deſtroying death, and caſting ſinners and devils into hell by the breath of thy mouth; and to complete the ſalvation of thy people, raiſing them up in glorified bodies like thine own, re-uniting them to their perfected ſouls, giving them the irreverſible diſcharge, and declaring them, with ſovereign authority, the everlaſting partakers of thy joy and kingdom. Then, glorious Lord, when thou ſhalt have put down all rule and all authority and power, when all things ſhall have been put under thy feet, ſhalt thou deliver up the kingdom which thou didſt exerciſe on earth to GOD even the Father; and thou ſhalt ſit down to reign for ever over thy people whom thou haſt purchaſed and redeemed, and they ſhall reign with thee for ever and ever. And now therefore being thus fully ſatisfied reſpecting the dominion of JESUS, I declare,

Fourthly, "That I humbly ſubject myſelf to his ſaving power in all reſpects. That I confidently truſt upon him as authoritatively executing all his offices towards me. That I quietly wait upon him for the performance of all ſalvation to me. And that, as the ſubject of his kingdom, I deſire to own him as my Lord, and the Lord of all things, by a dutiful uſe of myſelf and my gifts, by a public profeſſion of his name in the world, and by keeping my body and ſpirit for him to death and judgment. All which things I regard as important branches of my believing in JESUS, as the Lord of all things; and, any of which being omitted in my deſire and endeavour, I cannot be truly come to JESUS as my Saviour, nor have confidence in him as ſuch, becauſe I am without one of the

grounds on which his saving power stands, the belief of his being *our Lord.*"

It may be proper to touch upon each of these points as the time will permit.

First, Seeing I know JESUS to be Lord of all things, I do humbly submit myself to his saving power in all respects. He is constituted of GOD a Saviour, and as such, I humbly desire to receive him, as fully commissioned, absolutely impowered, and amply qualified to save me. The words of his mouth can want no authority, and I would implicitly submit to them; as the Lord, having the government on his shoulders, he has authority to absolve me from the sentence of death, and bid me live, through the merit of his obedience, unto death: To him therefore I would come, and receive my pardon at his hands; and, having all things in his power, he can sanctify my heart, and keep me from all the power of the enemy; and with him I would leave my soul for this happy end. I see help no where else in any respect; my wisdom is foolishness; I am all over guilt; and Sin, the World, the Devil, Death, and Judgment, and Hell are against me. But JESUS is Lord of all things. To him therefore I have betaken myself, and I have determined that he shall be all my salvation.

Secondly, Seeing I know JESUS to be the Lord of all things, I do confidently trust upon him, as authoritatively executing his offices towards me. If JESUS be the Lord of all things, and all power be given to him in heaven and earth, and herein he acts, though as the Son of man, yet as the Son of GOD also, whose natural right in all things may not be violated, then

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he must not be considered as an Ambassador, who, though he has full instructions, yet is under the check and restraint of a superior power, but as having full power in himself, and all whose acts are valid, effectual and mighty, without reference to any other dominion. Consequently, because of this supreme authority in JESUS, we must credit every word of his mouth as Yea and Amen, without gainsaying; coming to him, as he has directed, we must believe that he confers upon us forgiveness of sin, without doubting; and committing our souls unto him we must be persuaded, with perfect satisfaction, that he will keep them. As far as we fail of this we do not treat him as the Lord of all things, and peculiarly as constituted such for the work of redemption. And yet, how ready are we to make little account of our failures this way, as if unbelieving fears were not much to be regarded, and the dishonouring of CHRIST, as if his authority and power were insufficient, had but small guilt in it? They are horribly inexcusable, who will not hearken to the words, nor come to the atonement, nor submit to the grace of the Lord JESUS. And they are not to be excused, who hear, believe, and submit in a diffidence of his power.

Thirdly, Seeing I know JESUS to be the Lord of all things, I do quietly wait upon him for the performance of all salvation to me. *It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord*; and waiting, I desire to remain in the ways my Lord has appointed me, that he may lighten my darkness, that he may cleanse me from the guilt of my daily transgressions, that he may renew my heart

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from day to day, supporting me in trials, sanctifying to me all troubles, and conducting me safely through this wilderness to the land of my rest where I would be. Waiting is the opposite to impatience; and as the one proves a belief in JESUS as an all-sufficient, most wise, and vigilant Lord and Governour; so the other must of course call in question the reality of his mediatorial dominion, or the might of his power, or the administration of his government, or his faithfulness to the charge he has taken upon him. Quiet waiting is a great mark of a strong faith and an humbled heart. It was in this that *Abraham* eminently gave GOD glory. Should he not tarry the Lord's leisure? and because the fulfilment of the promise was long delayed, should he say, The Lord hath forgotten, he will never do it?

Lastly, Seeing I know JESUS to be the Lord of all things, and have taken him to be my Lord, as the subject of his kingdom, I desire to own him as such. And that these three ways, *1st*, By a dutiful use of *myself*, and of *my gifts*. As to *myself*, I am not my own; I am bought with a price, and at so dear a rate did my Lord buy me, that it cost him his blood. But not only am I his purchase, I am his conquest also. He conquered my enemy that had me in chains, and delivered me. What, that I should be my own master? No; but his servant, which is far better: But farther still, I have solemnly yielded up myself to him; and shall I draw back? Every way I am his. To his service, use, and glory I am devoted. And I desire that he may use me as he pleases, not consulting my will, humour, ease, interest, or any conve-

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nience of life, but disposing of me as shall be most for his glory and interest. Then as to *my gifts*, they came from him. If I have knowledge, wisdom, prudence, wealth, honour, he is the Lord of all things, the property lies in him. And what will he that I do with them? That I lay them out for the good of his church, and for the enlargement of his interests, as a betrusted servant in his family? Surely he could put them into my hands with no other design. And to this end, through thy grace, O Lord JESUS, and not to the indulgence of pride, or the gratifying of inclination, I have determined to use them in all watchfulness, prayer and fears. But there is a peculiar talent he has trusted with me, my station and calling in the world. *There* his honour is most concerned. My soul be faithful there. Do thy duty there as to the Lord. *Secondly*, I desire to own him as my Lord, by a public profession of his name in the world. I desire to walk in his steps, however mean it may make me appear. I desire to observe his words, though I alone were so engaged in the midst of the earth, and all were hating, reproaching and persecuting me for doing so. I desire never to be ashamed of owning myself his in any wise, whatever ridicule it may bring upon me; I desire to own my Lord in the most public manner, that the world may take notice I am a servant of his. I desire to own him in all his public institutions, his day, the ministrations of his word, the memorials of his body and blood: I desire to own him in his people by countenancing them, encouraging them, giving my hand publicly to them because they are his; comforting with them, and doing them all the offices of brotherly love, as belonging to CHRIST. In all things I desire to con-

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fess JESUS to be my Lord before men, as I trust he will confess me to be his servant before the angels of GOD. And, *Thirdly*, I desire to own JESUS to be my Lord, by keeping my body and spirit for him to death and judgment. They are both his, and I desire to keep both for him, that I may render them to him at his day, that in me he may be glorified as well as others. I desire to keep my *body* fit for his use, undefiled by intemperance, lust, sloth, or any other carnal indulgence; and my *spirit* free from those unchristian tempers of pride, ambition, covetousness, envy, resentment, love of this world, which would make it loathsome in his sight, and prejudicial to his glory. I desire to be preparing for his eternal service in a life of self-denial and spiritual-mindedness. I desire to watch and pray, that my body may be in subjection to my spirit, and my spirit to the Lord. I desire to be found thus doing when thou Lord shalt come, and then to render up my soul and body chearfully to thee, to serve thee and follow thee to all the ages of a blissful eternity.

Brethren, thus the true Christian believeth in the Lord JESUS. Is this the common character of those who are called by the name of Christians? Let us consider what we have heard, let us examine ourselves whether we be in the faith, let us prove ourselves. Happy are they who call JESUS *Lord*, on such a footing as this. But what will it avail to call him Lord a thousand times over, when we are strangers to this temper of faith? We must have made some remarks on ourselves while this discourse has been delivering. Call them back, and improve them. If I have not spoken the words of truth and soberness, condemn me; but

but if I have, O spare not yourselves, as you hope for mercy in the day of the Lord.

SERMON XVII.

ACTS xvi. 30, 31.

What must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.

WE have particularly considered the pretensions which JESUS has to our faith in him as our Saviour, from his being CHRIST, in himself the only Son of the Father, and by constitution our Lord. If he be set apart and fitted for his work by divine unction, if he cannot want power to perform it as being the only-begotten Son, and if his authority be not less than his power as Lord of all in his mediatorial character, then the grounds on which we believe in him cannot be insufficient, and we have no room left us to question, whether there be a saving efficacy in all that he has done, is doing, and has yet to do, in the matter of GOD's glory in our salvation, who believe in his name.

By what steps he has proceeded and does proceed herein, working out salvation, we now declare, when we say, "Who was conceived of the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, &c." In which several points are comprized certain foundations of fact, upon the per-

performance of which, we, knowing also who he is, remain satisfied in his being a Saviour sufficient in all respects.

The first is, "That he was conceived by the Holy Ghost;" and from his being so (in connection with the dignity of his person as the Son of GOD, and his divine constitution to his office and to dominion therein, and with the several other points which come afterwards to be spoken to as necessary to make his work complete) we profess our belief in him as JESUS, *the Saviour*. And it will be exceedingly delightful to the humble soul to follow JESUS through the whole of these transactions, and to see him taking away, one after another, all those obstacles which stood in the way of fallen man's happiness in GOD in the future and eternal world.

This person, who, we say, was conceived by the Holy Ghost, is no other than he who was just before spoken of, JESUS CHRIST the only Son our Lord. And when we alledge that he was conceived by the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin *Mary*, we mean to express our belief, *That the word was made flesh.* Concerning which incarnation of the word by the operation of the Holy Ghost on the Virgin *Mary*, enabling her to conceive, two things must be previously laid down.

First, That there was an absolute necessity that the only-begotten Son, who had undertaken the work of redemption, should be made man to effect it. He was to redeem man who was fallen from GOD, and lay under a curse declared by the mouth of GOD, *In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die*, and

which

which juſtice demanded the full execution of. The nature therefore which lay under the curſe for ſin muſt ſuffer; and in that muſt the atonement be made. According to which was the original promiſe reſpecting our redemption; *The ſeed of the woman was to bruiſe the Serpent's head.* And therefore the apoſtle urges, that, *Foraſmuch as the children are partakers of fleſh and blood, he alſo himſelf likewiſe took part of the ſame, that through death he might deſtroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their life-time ſubject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the ſeed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren.* And,

Secondly, It was not leſs neceſſary that the manhood he ſhould aſſume ſhould be free from ſin, I mean eſpecially from original ſin, which is the ſource of all actual tranſgreſſion, and that for ſome very important reaſons. Namely, *Firſt*, That it might be *fit* to be aſſumed into union with the *word*, which it could not be if itſelf had been defiled by ſin. *Secondly*, Becauſe being to diſcharge the office of a Saviour, and therefore both to perform a perfect obedience, and to make a ſatisfying atonement for us, it was abſolutely needful that he ſhould be altogether *holy, harmleſs, undefiled, and ſeparate from ſinners*; for otherwiſe his obedience could not have been a proper and acceptable obedience, nor of conſequence his death meritorious. His obedience could not have been a proper obedience, becauſe it would have been deficient in a perfect conformity to the law, which on no conſideration and in no view admits of the leaſt deviation from

it;

it; and so his death would have been but the mere execution of the curse of the law upon him for his own personal guilt: so that in this case, instead of having provided a righteousness and atonement for others, he should have needed both from some other for himself. And, *Thirdly*, Because as from our other representative and covenant-head there is derived to us a principle of sin, so from CHRIST, believers must receive a contrary and quickening spirit and principle of universal holiness, which nevertheless could not have been the case, had he not been possessed of it himself, but born in sin as we are.

These things being laid down, we shall very readily see the meaning of our professor, when he says, "I believe in JESUS CHRIST the only Son our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost. I believe in him, says he, in all those characters, among other reasons for this, because he was in that manner conceived: for as I am well satisfied of the necessity there was that the word should have been made flesh for our salvation, and that that flesh should have been free from all sin, so I hereby declare myself to be undoubtedly assured of the fact itself," and this is my intention in saying, "that I believe he was conceived by the Holy Ghost;" whereby I would have it understood,

First, That I believe the human nature or manhood of JESUS CHRIST was conceived by the Holy Ghost. And my meaning is on the one hand, that what the Virgin was enabled to conceive in her womb was a complete, real, and proper man, consisting of a reasonable soul and human flesh as other men do, and of his

his mother's substance as other children are; in which respect there is no manner of difference between him and me, both of us deriving our substance in the womb from our respective mothers; and both subsisting of a reasonable soul and human flesh, which I as plainly discern he did, as I know I do myself. But on the other hand, I am not less comfortably satisfied, that in regard of the manner of our conception in the wombs of our several mothers, there is the greatest difference. For whereas I was in a natural, ordinary way begotten, the manhood of JESUS was conceived without the Virgin's knowing a man, by *the Holy Ghost coming upon her, and the power of the Highest overshadowing her*, whereby this child was singularly conceived. And although I know not any thing of the manner of this miraculous conception, nor have any conceit arising therefrom that what was begotten was of the substance of the Holy Ghost, or any thing other than proper man; yet hereby I am fully assured the nature of that child was *holy*, and that being conceived by the Holy Ghost he was conceived without that infection of original sin which accompanies the conception of every one naturally gendered of *Adam*; of which as I am satisfied by the manner of his conception, so am I further clearly assured by the express words of the angel, who speaking of the Holy Ghost's overshadowing *Mary*, adds as the consequence thereof, *Therefore also that HOLY thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God.* And that he was indeed a holy thing, without any mixture of sin, is still additionally manifest to me from his whole life afterwards, in which he always did the things which please GOD,

and

and upon just grounds challenges all his enemies to *convince him of sin*; as indeed, well he might, seeing he had so great and sufficient a testimony of his perfect uprightness, as GOD's public voice from heaven, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.* But this is not all that I would be understood to mean by his being conceived by the Holy Ghost, for,

Secondly, I do intend thereby farther (without which indeed I could not say that the word was made flesh) the assumption of this manhood so conceived into personal union with the eternal Son of the Father. This assumption or taking of the manhood into GOD, as it is the corner-stone of all his mediatorial transactions, (since whatever he has done, does, or shall do, in quality of mediator, he does, not as GOD simply, but as GOD manifest in the flesh) I find clearly set down in Scripture, where I am told, *that the word was made flesh*; *that God was manifest in the flesh*; *that Christ Jesus being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of man.* Indeed nothing is more evident to me through the whole Scriptures, especially of the New Testament, than, that that very person who was the Son of GOD from all eternity, was made man in time. From the most undoubted testimonies, by the plainest declarations, and convincing actions, I am perfectly satisfied of his being at once the Son of GOD and the Son of man; I say at once, because while I see distinctly the divine and human natures subsisting in him, I see as distinctly that they subsist together in his own person. For by personal

union

union I mean the subsisting together of two things different in nature in one person. So I know that the soul and body of man are of different natures, yet united they make one only person, a man. In like manner I am as well convinced that two natures subsist together in CHRIST, so as that, while they are two different natures, they do nevertheless make but one person. I say, they do subsist together in his one person; and that without confusion: for although by their union they constitute that person, yet in that person they so subsist together as that there is no manner of mixture or changing the one nature with or into the other, but neither nature being changed into or confounded with the other, they do both retain the acts and operations which are proper to each nature. Nevertheless as both these natures do subsist in the same one person, the act of that person is that of both the natures together. Hence I hear JESUS saying while he was on earth, *that the Son of Man is in heaven*, ascribing, in consequence of this personal union, that which was proper to the divine nature unto the human, which latter was not then, but the divine nature only, in heaven. And so on the other part I find that which is proper to the human nature ascribed to the divine; as when it is said, *God purchased the Church with his own blood*, we have the action of the manhood attributed to the Godhead, and therein not only the clearest proof of the union of the two natures in CHRIST, but also the comfort to find that whatever the man JESUS said or did, was also done and said by the Son of GOD.—Knowing him therefore to be GOD and man in one person, I do,

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Moſt ſatisfiedly and aſſuredly acquieſce in him as being exactly that Mediator which the glory of GOD on one ſide, and the wants of us fallen creatures demand on the other. Being GOD and man at once he could in our nature perform an obedience and pay a price, which, becauſe of his being the Son of GOD, could not but be infinitely honourable to the law of the divine Majeſty, and infinitely ſatisfying of the demands of juſtice, therefore unqueſtionably available to the pardon and acceptance of all that believe in his name, ſinful and ungodly though they be. And being GOD as well as man, the other public actions proper to his manhood, (as well as his death) his reſurrection, aſcenſion, and life, muſt needs be powerfully efficacious to our being riſen, exalted, and living for evermore in him as our repreſentative. Had he been only God, he could not have reached our neceſſitous caſe, had he been only man, he could not have given the needful glory to the holineſs and juſtice of GOD which our rebellions had robbed him of. But now that I know him to be GOD and man in one perſon, I ſee him capable of giving all that glory to GOD, and all that ſalvation to men, which his rights or their needs require. And therefore I ſee in him all the direful conſequences of *Adam*'s ſin taken away. By the offence of *Adam* am I made a ſinner? By the obedience of the other I am made righteous. Thro' the ſin of *Adam* am I under a curſe? By the death of JESUS I am redeemed from it. By the fall of *Adam* was I born in ſin? JESUS has power to raiſe me to ſpiritual life. In *Adam* am I conſigned to death? in JESUS I am riſen again. As I am in *Adam* is there

no hope for me beyond the grave? CHRIST hath brought me life and immortality to light. In this God-man I see myself complete. The words he has spoken to me from lips like my own can want no authority, for he that speaketh them is GOD. He that intercedeth for me is he that also died in my behalf, bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh, touched with the feeling of my infirmities; and I am assured I can be denied nothing he asks for me, for he that died and pleadeth for me is GOD. Can sin, the world, or the devil be too strong for me, when the Son of GOD has in my nature vanquished them all, and is still GOD in the flesh for my protection and safety? This is the very person I wanted, and having such an one I can now want nothing. Gladly do I join my weak voice with that of the ministring angels, and, whilst I behold the incarnate GOD, sing with them, "*Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will towards men.*"

And now you may see how much is contained in this one sentence of the Creed, "conceived by the Holy Ghost." Have you understood these things? It will behove you to do so, and to lay them up in your hearts, for they are very comfortable. But do you also believe them? Do you believe that the manhood of JESUS CHRIST was framed of the substance of the virgin *Mary* by the operation of the Holy Ghost, and thereby conceived without the spot of original sin, and fitted for union with the Godhead, and for the work which the Son, as Redeemer, had to do in it and by it; and also that being thus prepared, it was actually taken into union with the eternal word in order to our salvation? If you do really believe this,

First, You are very sensible of your own misery in yourself. *Secondly*, You are very thankful for this wonderful work of GOD. *Thirdly*, You rest all your hope concerning pardon, grace, and glory, upon an union with this God-man JESUS.

First, A real belief of this incarnation of the Son implies a true sense of your misery in yourself. For the conception of the Redeemer, so directly and necessarily out of the common course of nature, plainly shews to what a sad condition the nature of man is sunk since and by the fall of *Adam*, while also the consequence of such apostasy is alike evident in the necessity there was of the incarnation of the Son to satisfy justice, and every way to repair the damage done by the fall.—Wherefore to own CHRIST's incarnation as a means needful to save us, is to acknowledge our misery in ourselves, and particularly that of which all other misery is but the consequence, *the sin of our nature*. And you will understand, that to believe and own your fallen nature, is indeed through such a divine conviction of the truth of it, as no man has nor can have by his own reason, but is really of the Holy Ghost. So that to be truly sensible of our fallen nature, without which there can be no practical believing in CHRIST as GOD incarnate, is the very gift of GOD; and the experience of it, especially in the deep iniquities thereof, instead of discouraging us, should give us great encouragement, that we are at least in the way to CHRIST.—But alas! how little sense is there of our miserable fallen state to be met with among those who name CHRIST's name! Ask any one almost you meet, whether they be corrupted creatures?

creatures? Many will deny it; many know not what you mean. Others will say, Why yes, who does not know that? to be sure we are all born in sin. But do you go farther with them, and say, now therefore if you be born in sin, if your nature is sin, you must needs have sin in you, and truly it is visible to this day your heart abounds with pride, and self-will, and covetousness, and unbelief, and hypocrisy, and envy, and malice. "What I? (the party will be ready to answer) Pray what do you take me for? I proud and covetous? I am as far from it as any person in the world. Nobody ever took me for such before. And to be plain, you are very uncharitable to judge of me so hardly, and very impertinent to say what you do." The truth is, very few people take any kind of notice of what is within them, and if their outsides be tolerably clean, are ready to think all is well. And yet we all alike profess to believe in CHRIST'S conception by the holy Ghost, that he might be free from that original corruption all others are defiled with.

Secondly, If you really believe the incarnation of the Son, you are very thankful for such a wonderful work of GOD. Truly it is of all others the most wonderful of GOD'S works; and St. *Paul* might well call it, *a great mystery*, because of the unsearchable wisdom, power, condescension and love that is therein. It is indeed so mysteriously wonderful, that the angels can find nothing in heaven like it, and therefore, as it were, forget the proper glories of their own station, to look into, admire, and adore this unparalleled instance of GOD'S workmanship. They sing in the

views of it, *Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will towards men.* And if you really believe it, you will join their praises and adorations. And what say you? Is it thus with you? Is your heart affected as it ought, while you look upon the incarnate GOD? Does it astonish you to see this condescension; the Son leaving his Father's bosom, and assuming our nature? Do you love to look upon this glorious sight? Does it dwell upon your soul with power, and bear away every earthly thing before it; filling you with real gratitude that you could cheerfully do any thing, and suffer any thing, and lose every thing for JESUS? And are you waiting, expecting, longing for the transporting day when you shall see and be for ever with JESUS?—This is our duty; and if we be not thus disposed toward JESUS, where is our faith? Do we really believe that the great GOD is come down from heaven to be our Saviour? It cannot be. And yet in what breast almost are these honourable, these grateful thoughts of JESUS to be found? Say, my Brother, Dost *thou* thus think of JESUS, thus love to think of him, thus burn for him and his interest? Ah traitor, mayest thou not rather say of thyself, "The love of JESUS, of JESUS the incarnate GOD, never warmed my heart; I never look upon him, never, never, no not one moment of my life do I look upon him with love and delight. Every day I slight him, I despise him, I dishonour him, I live to his disgrace, to the hindrance, to the injury of his kingdom and the hurt of his people. I, even I, live daily confirming, strengthening, upholding, and with all my power main-

maintaining and inlarging the kingdom of the devil. O where, where is my faith!"

Thirdly, If you really believe the incarnation of the Son, you are actually resting all your hope concerning pardon, grace, and glory in your being united unto this God-man JESUS. And this indeed is the best proof of your faith in the matter before us. As far as you see your misery and helplessness in yourself, you can have no confidence in yourself for acceptance with GOD, ability to serve him, and interest in his everlasting favour; and therefore, as far as in the sense of this your misery in yourself, you are made really to believe in JESUS CHRIST as the Word made Flesh to help you in all these respects, you will unquestionably rest all your hope in him. And here I must observe, that it will be impossible for you to put your trust in him with any confidence and satisfaction to your soul, unless, and any farther than you are persuaded that he is God-man, not only man but GOD, and both GOD and man in one person. You will not, indeed you cannot, believe there is a sufficiency in his righteousness and atonement for your pardon and acceptance, or that he is able to raise you from and above sin now, or to life everlasting from the grave hereafter, unless you believe him to be GOD. Wherefore your real trust in CHRIST for pardon, grace and glory from the Father, in, by, and through him, can be the only satisfying proof to your own soul, that you believe him to be GOD manifest in the flesh for our salvation. And do you thus rest your All on him? And are you thus persuaded he is sufficient for you? Search and try

your hearts, for nothing but they can teſtify whether you have or no this faith in you.

Here, Brethren, lies all your real hope, and if you turn to any other; if you are thinking to ſtand before GOD in your own righteouſneſs, or to get heaven by your own doings, I muſt plainly tell you that you overturn Chriſtianity from the very foundation, and your own ſoul along with it. Look therefore well to yourſelves, for *there is no other name under heaven given unto men whereby we muſt be ſaved, but only the name of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt.*

SERMON XVIII.

ACTS xvi. 30, 31.

What muſt I do to be ſaved? And they ſaid, Believe on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and thou ſhalt be ſaved.

IN ſpeaking of our LORD's Conception by the Holy Ghoſt, the important point of his Incarnation was opened, in regard both of its neceſſity and reality. Yet ſomething ſtill remains to be added for the farther confirmation of our faith in JESUS, as the Word made Fleſh, and which is contained in the words that follow, *born of the Virgin Mary.* Concerning which the believer proceeds making his profeſſion, and declaring farther the grounds of his faith, by ſaying,

Firſt,

First, I believe that the woman, who was thus miraculously enabled to conceive, was a virgin at the time of her conception, and that at least she continued so, till she brought forth her first-born Son. For I find that she, unto whom the Angel *Gabriel* was sent from GOD, was a virgin, that she continued so after her conception, for *before they* (*Joseph* and she) *came together*, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost; and that she was really no other at the time of bringing forth, because I am not only told *a Virgin shall be with child*, but also *bring forth a son*, which prophecy is applied to this very case, unto which only, according to the intention of the Holy Ghost, it did or could fully and exactly belong, by St. *Matthew*. And as I see the necessity of her being a virgin, because of JESUS's being conceived without the spot of original pollution, so in her being such, I see the completion of those prophecies concerning the Messiah, in which this very thing had been foretold of him: *The Lord hath created a new thing on the earth, a woman shall compass a man. And behold, a Virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call his name Immanuel.* And farther,

Secondly, As I believe her to have been a Virgin, so also that her name was *Mary*. Whereby I do not mean to ascribe any peculiar eminency to the name, but to signify that I mean thereby that *Mary* who was espoused to *Joseph*, of the tribe of *Judah*, to which the promise of the Messiah was made, and of the lineage of *David*, to whose family that promise was yet more especially confined. And farthermore,

Thirdly, I do ſtedfaſtly believe that the Child, which through the operation of the Holy Ghoſt ſhe did conceive in her womb of her own ſubſtance, was there nouriſhed by the ſame ſubſtance of the Virgin as other children are, till her full time was come, and then born into the world in like manner as are other infants.

And by all this my meaning is, that I believe that manhood which, immediately on its conception in the womb, the eternal Son of GOD aſſumed into himſelf in perſonal union, was proper man, and that it was no other than that very perſon, perfect GOD and perfect man, who thus lay hid in the womb of the Virgin, and at length was born into the world. So that, on the whole, I declare what I am fully convinced of, as a point of the utmoſt moment to my confidence in JESUS as my Saviour, that the only Son, by taking that manhood into himſelf which the Virgin *Mary*, of the tribe of *Judah*, and of the lineage of *David*, had by the operation of the Holy Ghoſt conceived in her womb, afterwards nouriſhed there, and at length brought forth, was made fleſh; from that moment ſubſiſting GOD and man together in one perſon, not only while he was on earth, but now alſo that he is in heaven; and that it is that very Perſon, God-man, who now reigneth as head over all things to his Church, who ſhall come in power and great glory to judge the quick and the dead, and who ſhall be the final, full, and bleſſed portion and ſecurity of his purchaſed poſſeſſion in everlaſting glory.

You may ſee now from the whole, that theſe and the former words put together amount in ſubſtance to this

this one point, the incarnation of the only-begotten of the Father. Upon which endearing ſubject I am glad to have a little ſpace here for ſome neceſſary improvements. And,

Firſt, Was the Word made Fleſh for our ſalvation? Then what was our condition that could need ſuch a Saviour! Conſider what his buſineſs was in the world. Was it not this, to bear our iniquities, to be made a curſe for us, to give his ſoul an offering for ſin, to be bruiſed and put to grief, to be crucified and ſlain? Who, what the Lord of glory, the Prince of Life, the only-begotten of the Father, the Heir of all things, the Maker of the heavens? Was it no other than he, that "for us men, and for our ſalvation came down from heaven? And was incarnate by the Holy Ghoſt of the Virgin *Mary*, and was made man?" Judge then how deep our ruin, and how inſufficient all human help! Kings ſtoop not in perſon to petty concerns. Had we needed only to be taught the will of GOD, a mere inſpired Prophet had done as well. But Sin was entered into the world, the Wrath of GOD was gone forth, Death was waiting for the divine command to ſeize the criminals, and Hell, with remorſeleſs mouth, yawned behind to devour. The caſe was urgent. Mercy muſt exert itſelf to the higheſt ſtretch, or the human race is undone for ever. Sin was committed, the irreverſible curſe againſt it had been before denounced. What could be done? Juſtice muſt be ſatisfied. The Majeſty of heaven muſt loſe nothing of his glory. Unleſs ſatisfaction was made, there was no place for repentance; there could have been no re-

pentance; to men any more than devils GOD would not have given grace to repent; and, could there have been any, it had ſerved no ſaving purpoſe. But who could heal ſo wide a breach? Who was ſufficient for ſo vaſt an undertaking? The law muſt have more than a perfect obedience paid it, it muſt be an obedience which would reſtore it to all that honour and dignity which the moſt perfect and ſinleſs ſubmiſſion of *Adam* and all his race to all its demands would have given it upon earth. The curſe declared and gone forth muſt be ſatisfied to the uttermoſt; and by an equivalent which would fully anſwer to all of us enduring eternal puniſhments. Death was to be overcome, yea to be made a paſſage to life. The grave muſt be made to render back its dead, to render them back with happy advantage, incorruptible, glorious, powerful, ſpiritual. New heavens and earth muſt be prepared, and ſinners of this world prepared alſo to inhabit them. All things muſt be replaced on the original footing, when GOD made man in paradiſe; and an eternal peace and fellowſhip reſtored between him and us. See, Sirs, what a work! And who but the incarnate GOD is ſufficient for it? Behold he comes, he comes down from heaven, he leaves his Father's boſom, he takes up his reſidence in the Virgin's womb, he is born, he is found in faſhion as a man; he comes to live; to die; by Death to conquer Satan, Death and Hell; to riſe again to reign; to ſet open the gate of life. Look upon this ſight, my Friends. Come near and behold it. Now that God is vailed in fleſh, you may look upon him without danger; the ſight will conſume nothing

but your pride. That indeed it will lay very low. Would GOD it might! Surely it ought. What have we to be proud of? Shall we be proud of our being sinners, guilty sinners, condemned sinners, helpless sinners, sinners of such magnitude, that the very Son of GOD must needs be made man to save us from the pit of hell, the place and the portion of devils? Here is the glass in which we may see our true features. And into this glass we have never looked to any good purpose, unless we this day know, that in ourselves we are *wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked*; and our souls be attending upon the Word made Flesh in the cry of the multitudes, *Hosanna to the Son of David; blessed is he that cometh in the Name of the Lord; Hosanna in the Highest.*

Secondly, Let us consider the amazing condescension displayed in the incarnation of the eternal Son of the Father. High as the heavens above the earth are the thoughts of GOD above ours. He would make known his justice, wisdom, and love among the fallen inhabitants of the earth. And what a way past finding out doth he choose for the purpose! The express image of the Father's person shall assume the character and office of Redeemer; and therein set out to view his proper glory as the only-begotten. This was *a glory which he had with the Father before the world was:* but now he will illustrate it upon earth, and let men see, that in him dwell all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, of grace and love. Accordingly, in the full foresight of all that he must submit to in this mediatorial capacity, he says, *Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, but a body hast thou prepared me; in burnt-offerings*

and ſacrifices for ſin thou haſt had no pleaſure: then ſaid I, Lo! I come to do thy will, O God. He undertook it with infinite ſatisfaction. *I delight to do it, yea thy law is within my heart,* in the midſt of my bowels. Yet to what did he condeſcend in doing this will of GOD? The apoſtle will tell us in a few words, *Being in the form of God, he made himſelf of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a ſervant, and was made in the likeneſs of men: and being found in faſhion as a man, he humbled himſelf, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the croſs.* It muſt never be forgotten, that the actions of JESUS are the actions of his whole perſon, in which the two natures ſubſiſting together, what is properly the act of one cannot be done without the other: in which view it is that St. *Paul* here ſpeaks of his *taking upon him the form of a ſervant, humbling himſelf, and becoming obedient unto the death of the croſs, who was in the form of God, and thought it not robbery to be equal with God.* See here the riches of CHRIST! What treaſures of wiſdom and grace are not ſhewn forth in him and by him in this condeſcenſion! How honourable our incarnate GOD herein! *Ye know the grace of our Lord* JESUS CHRIST, ſays the choſen veſſel, *that though he was rich, yet for your ſakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.* Honourable to his name this voluntary poverty of his, *that he might inrich us poor.* This indeed was love. Let all the angels of GOD worſhip this condeſcending Creator. Let the redeemed, that come to *Zion* with everlaſting joy, receive him with the loudeſt hoſannas. At the name of JESUS let *every knee bow, of things in heaven and things on earth, and things under the earth*; yea, let every tongue confeſs,

feſs, that JESUS CHRIST *is Lord.* Let the happy ſaints above that behold his glory cry out eternally, *Worthy is the Lamb that was ſlain, to receive power, and riches, and wiſdom, and ſtrength, and honour, and glory, and bleſſing. Bleſſing and honour, and glory and power, be unto him that ſitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.* And upon earth, *O thou that telleſt good tidings to Zion, get thee up into the high mountain: O thou that telleſt good tidings to Jeruſalem, lift up thy voice with ſtrength; lift it up, be not afraid. Say unto the cities of Judah, behold your God! behold, the Lord God will come with ſtrong hand, and his arm ſhall rule for him: Behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. He ſhall feed his flock like a ſhepherd; he ſhall gather the lambs with his arms, and carry them in his boſom, and ſhall gently lead thoſe that are with young.* Thus we ſhould think of, receive, and honour our incarnate GOD. But,

Thirdly, Since our profeſſion engages us to a conformity with JESUS, his incarnation will furniſh us with ſome of the moſt exalted leſſons of Chriſtianity, and at the ſame time preſent before us the moſt engaging motive to practiſe them. We will conſider as much of the mind of CHRIST, as is peculiarly exemplified in this vaſt myſtery of the incarnation, which perhaps may be compriſed under theſe three inſtructive particulars. The wonderful readineſs of his mind to his whole mediatorial work, in obedience to his Father's will. The uſe he was inclined to make of his glorious ſufficiencies. And his eſtimation of all worldly things. Each of which we will endeavour to apply as the time will permit.

Firſt,

First, The wonderful readineſs of his mind to his whole mediatorial work, in obedience to his Father's will. He could ſay in truth, *I delight to do thy will, O God, yea, thy law is within my bowels.* Obedience was graven on his heart, and nothing could ſhake it. He came into the world to do GOD's will; that was his grand motive. Though he knew the whole of his work, and ſaw perfectly what the doing it would coſt him, what he muſt endure from men, and what a ſacrifice he muſt make to divine juſtice, yet with the fulleſt conſent, with the freeſt choice, not of conſtraint, (for he was under none) but willingly, he undertook the whole in obedience to his Father's will; *Lo, I come to do thy will, O God.* Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he ſuffered. He learned it. What? was it a leſſon he had to learn? No, for the law of GOD was in his bowels. But now in his ſufferings he practiſed or experienced it, or perhaps he ſet his hand to it, entered upon his work of ſuffering in the moſt ſhameful and painful part of it, and by and by being made perfect, having completed and finiſhed it, he became the author of eternal ſalvation unto all them that obey him. Obedience was his buſineſs, his employment in the world. This is the mind of CHRIST. And is it ours, my friends? Is GOD's law within our hearts alſo? Has the obedience of JESUS CHRIST diſplayed to us the ſovereignty of the bleſſed GOD, recommended to us his ſervice, and put a glory on the law, and ſet it before us in its proper and deſirable excellency in ſuch manner, that now we delight therein, it is dearer to us than thouſands of gold and ſilver, it is our meat and drink

drink to do the will of GOD? Else we have not put on CHRIST, and are fundamentally strangers to the mind that was in him. What? did he come to do GOD's will, that he might give us encouragement to neglect it? Or does he not expressly say, That *not every one who calleth him Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he only that doth the will of his Father which is in heaven.* Nothing is plainer than that GOD made us at first to serve him; and it is not less plain, that all true believers in JESUS CHRIST are of their Master's mind, and, after his example, zealous of good works; for such are *God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God before ordained that they should walk in them.* Now therefore, brethren, are you all thus minded? Is it the great concern of you all to serve and please GOD? Let your consciences say, if this be nearest your hearts? If it be, if you have an unfeigned love of GOD's law, if in the inner man, in the very bottom of your heart, you like, approve, and heartily desire to be conformed to it in every tittle without exception, and can never be satisfied till your whole man, soul, spirit and body, be brought at length into a perfect conformity with it; and if this inward choice be proved to be genuine and real by your constant endeavour in all things to please GOD, and in nothing to please your own natural inclinations, then assuredly you have the Spirit of CHRIST, and are one of his. But if your ruling desire be to please yourself and the world; if your heart be unacquainted with the excellency of GOD's law, and you find no love of it there; if you know not the restraining fear of GOD's power and presence in your soul,

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but are walking in a spirit of licentiousness and security; if your soul be without experience of divine love, and neither the loveliness, nor loving-kindness of GOD have an influence upon it to engage you to any grateful purpose of walking with and serving him; if you see not that to do the will of GOD is your one only business, or, though you seem to see it is, if you either seek not from his word what his will is, or make no serious inquiries whether you are performing it or no; if you live after the course of the world, and interest, pleasure, honour direct your conduct in such a case, what would you have me say? Would you that I say, you have the mind of CHRIST? You would judge me a base flatterer if I did, a lying prophet, a vile dissembler, a horrid betrayer of my office and your souls; your own hearts would give me the lie, as they are even now doing to any confidence you may rashly have taken up of your being in CHRIST.

Secondly, As the incarnation of CHRIST teaches us obedience, so also an humble use of whatever we are and have to GOD's glory, and the good of others. Pride is all selfish, and wraps us up in ourselves, without regard to GOD or man. Under this influence we only consider what we are, to be vain upon it; and our gifts and endowments are only enjoyed to bring us in an income of homage and praise, if not from GOD, yet at least from man. We make no use of them to the ends they were designed for; and any farther than the purposes of our own reputation, interest, or ease may call them into action, they are made even no use of at all. But CHRIST teaches us a better lesson. *Let nothing*, says St. *Paul*, *be done through strife or vain-glory*.

glory. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. To be vain-glorious of what you have, and to have no consideration of others in the use of it, he subjoins, is not the mind of CHRIST. He was in the form of GOD, and yet condescended to become a servant amongst men, and even to die for us. Did he consider his own things? Yea, did he not forget his own glory, and stoop to the meanest estate and the deepest sufferings? And why? Was it because he considered the things of others? If he had not, would he have condescended as he did? Would he have taken up our nature, lived in a low condition, submitted to every kind and degree of reproach and suffering, to the shame, the pain, the death of a cross? All these submissions our desperate case required of him who alone was able to help us; and therefore he thus submitted for our good, to the glory of GOD. O, unparalleled love! who can come near it, who feel the blessed saving effects of it, without being kindled into the like flame? Brethren, what worth is there in our gifts, our talents, our time, our life, but to bestow them in this CHRIST-like manner? Shall CHRIST, forgetting himself, live for us, and we, who call ourselves his disciples, live for ourselves, and do nothing for the glory of GOD, and the salvation of souls? Is this the Spirit of CHRIST, or is it a lifeless formality? Away with all pretences to Christianity, if ye are strangers to the power and the spirit of it. And if there be any thing peculiar, eminent, and glorious in the religion of JESUS, it is, that by the power of a divine faith the soul is taken up above the narrow considerations of self, and engages in the noble views of

serving

ſerving men in their moſt important intereſts, as well as preſent happineſs, to the honour of GOD. This glorious deſign evidently brought down CHRIST from heaven; and inconteſtably there is nothing but entering thereinto, in ſubordination to him, that can bring us up thither. As a point therefore of the laſt importance to the reputation of our religion, and the ſalvation of our own ſouls, we ſhould enter every one of us into a ſerious inquiry, whether this ſpirit be in us; whether we be acting on this plan; and whether theſe be the grand views we have in life, and by which all our advantages, abilities, and opportunities are in our general courſe directed. Otherwiſe we know not the LORD, nor will he own us for his on the day that he maketh up his jewels. Yet,

Thirdly, What diſgrace has JESUS put upon all the pomp and pride of life! And how taken away all reproach from poverty! Who knows not that the incarnate GOD was born of a poor woman, was brought forth in a ſtable, was laid in a manger, the inn being taken up by more noble gueſts? Who knows not, that he lived in a ſtate of dependence, having throughout his life no houſe of his own to lay his head in, and being maintained by the liberality of others? This every one knows; but alas! who conſiders? The pomp of life, to be of importance in the world, to bear a ſway for wealth and abundance, to live at eaſe, to be above the dreadful apprehenſion of poverty, is not this the too common character of thoſe who profeſs themſelves the followers of that JESUS who took upon him the form of a ſervant? Who almoſt has learnt from the low eſtate of the Son of Man, having food

and

and raiment therewith to be content? Who is not ashamed of poverty, and how often is it despised, though the King of Glory was among the poorest of men? But such is the way of the children of this world. Their god blinds them. As they see nothing better than what lies before them, so they cannot be expected to do other than lay up their hearts in it, and to measure all their good and evil by present prosperity and adversity. But has the believer learnt all this lesson from his Master? Hast thou not still some lurking esteem of worldly honour, some secret puffing up of heart through present distinctions of place, fortune, or family? Is there not still a hankering after some figure in the world, and an uneasy apprehension of being overlooked and made no account of? Is not thy heart craving easy circumstances, dissatisfied in the want, and but too well pleased in the enjoyment of them? It is not necessity, but pride and love of ease, which create those painful anxieties our hearts are too much acquainted with. Else how is it that, while few if any of us want food and raiment more or less, we all want content? Let us consider the Manger and the Stable; and let that sight repress every ambitious thought, and every complaining fear. And let us be assured, that then we have most of the mind of CHRIST in us, and are farthest translated into his spiritual kingdom, when we are most indifferent about the good, and most reconciled to the evil things of this present world; when neither prosperity puffs us up, nor adversity depresses us. Ah, Sirs, how happy would it be for us even here, if we had so learned CHRIST!

SER-

SERMON XIX.

ACTS xvi. 30, 31.

What must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.

HAVING spoken of the Incarnation of the Son of GOD from these words of the Creed, *Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary*, we proceed now to another foundation of fact on which we build our stedfast belief in JESUS as a sufficient Saviour; namely, *Suffered under Pontius Pilate.*

There will need no more to be said concerning the words *under Pontius Pilate*, but to observe, that they are added, either to determine the time of our Saviour's sufferings, because it was the manner of the *Jews* at that time to record the history of remarkable facts by referring to the name of the person under whose government they happened; or to account for the particular manner and nature of his suffering, and thereby to ascertain the fulfilment of certain prophecies relative thereto, and which would not have been fulfilled had JESUS suffered after the *Jewish* manner of punishment.

The main point is, *his suffering*. And here our believer goes forward with his profession, and declares,

First, I believe that the person, of whose suffering I now speak, is that very God-man, and no other, JESUS; of whose being CHRIST, the only Son of the Father, our Lord, and incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin *Mary*, I have already pronounced my most unshaken

ſhaken perſuaſion. I believe it was this very perſon, and no other, that ſuffered; that it was he, who being the only-begotten of the Father, and Lord of all things, was made man, that ſuffered. Not in his divine nature did he ſuffer; he could not: but in his human, yet inaſmuch as I know that his human nature has no ſubſiſtence but in and with the divine in one perſon, while I deny that the Godhead did or could ſuffer, I affirm that he who is GOD as well as man ſuffered; and therefore by virtue of this perſonal union applying the actions of the one nature to the other, I ſtick not to ſay with St. *Paul*, *The princes of this world crucified the Lord of glory*. And,

Secondly, As I am ſatisfied that he, JESUS, the Son of GOD and the Son of man, ſuffered, ſo am I fully aſſured that what he ſuffered was the whole curſe of the law. *He ſuffered for us*; and if ſo, he muſt needs ſuffer what lay againſt us, which was no leſs than the curſe of the law. I believe that it was his office to redeem us from the curſe of the law; and I know that he could not do this unleſs he were made a curſe for us, becauſe through original and actual tranſgreſſion we all lay under ſentence of death. All that curſe which was due to our ſins by the juſtice of GOD, and was pronounced againſt them by his righteous ſentence, I know that he ſuffered; and that to the whole extent unto which the ſentence reached. Therefore, ſince the ſentence reached to the whole man, ſoul and body, I believe that he ſuffered in both. In his *body*, as throughout his whole life, ſo more eſpecially in the concluſion of it, when I ſee him in the hands of wicked and blood-thirſty men, and treated by them with an uncommon

uncommon degree of severity, cruelty and inhumanity, till they had effected their malicious and furious purposes by nailing him to the accursed tree, where he continued till these sufferings were completed and issued in the pangs of death. In his *soul*, by inexpressible grief, exceeding sorrow, and sore amazement, when the Lord was laying upon him the iniquities of us all, and he was bearing our griefs and carrying our sorrows; by a distress of spirit, which, however innocent, was too big to be contained, bursting forth in the most earnest prayers for the removal of this bitter cup, if, consistent with the Father's will and the ends of his sufferings, it were possible, and at the same time in a sweat which was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground. In a word, I know that he suffered in his whole man, and all the curse of the law. And,

Thirdly, As I am satisfied there was necessity this Son of GOD in our nature should thus give his soul a sacrifice for sin, as well for perfecting the work of reconciliation, as for fulfilling the scriptures of GOD concerning him; so am I assured that this his suffering was altogether effectual to all the ends designed by it, and particularly to make atonement for sin. Of which efficacy of his sufferings to take away sin I have no manner of question, as I am assured there was that in them which could not but make them every way meritorious. For I am constrained to believe there must be an infinite merit in these propitiatory sufferings.

First, Because of the dignity of the person whose sufferings they were. The dignity of this glorious person I cannot comprehend when I consider him in his divine nature, the Son of GOD, *whom he hath appointed heir*

heir of all things, by whom he made the heavens, the brightneſs of his glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon: neither can I reach unto the comprehenſion of that dignity his human nature (deſpiſed as he was, and is, and rejected of men) was exalted unto by being aſſumed into union with him, who is *over all God bleſſed for ever.* But this I can eaſily conceive, that if ſo auguſt a perſon gave himſelf for us, the curſe of the law muſt by his ſufferings have been fully executed, and the demands of juſtice paid to the uttermoſt farthing. I can well conceive the merit of this blood-ſhedding, while I certainly know that the blood ſhed is that of the Son of GOD.—Nor is this all, for as I acknowledge the merit of CHRIST's ſufferings becauſe eſpecially of the dignity of his perſon; ſo,

Secondly, Becauſe of his perfect obedience to the law of GOD. Without this he might indeed have ſuffered, but he could have made no ſatisfaction for ſin. But when I know him to be *a Lamb without blemiſh*; when I remember that he *always did the things that pleaſe God*; when I hear GOD's repeated teſtimony of him from heaven, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed*, which he could not have been, had not that Son been an obedient child; when I know that *he magnified the law* by ſubmitting to it, and *made it honourable* by ſetting it forth before the world in its full beauty, majeſty and lovelineſs, through his obedience; ſo that the glory thereof, which otherwiſe had not, and could not have been ſo ſeen, was brought openly before the face of the world, and diſplayed in its moſt engaging light; when I am aſſured that, as the repreſentative of ſinners, and as appointed by GOD thereunto, he fulfilled all the

righteouſneſs

righteousness of the law, without coming short in the least degree of the high demands it makes upon our nature, dispositions, desires, thoughts, words and works, insomuch that the *prince of this world had nothing* in any sort *in him:* when, I say, in connection with the dignity of his person I consider the perfectness of his obedience, I am fully persuaded that the sufferings of such an one could not but be, what they are said to be, *of a sweet-smelling savour to God.* And,

Thirdly, To complete the meritoriousness of his sufferings, I see, that he was not only obedient in life, but likewise was so unto death; his suffering was the greatest and most noble part of his obedience. This completed his righteousness, for he was *made perfect through sufferings*; this crowned the whole, and finished his work of making atonement and propitiation for sin. Had he not been a perfectly righteous man, he could have made no satisfaction for others whatever he had suffered; and whatever were his righteousness, if he had not made the atonement, the curse had still stood out against us. But I see him not only obedient, but obedient unto death, in the merit of his purity and holiness going forward to make a sacrifice for sin, which not only the dignity of his person but also the holiness of his human nature rendered him alone capable of making, and which he could make to the full satisfaction of infinite justice. And while I behold so great and so good a person suffering for us; while I see divinity stooping so low, and humanity lifted so high above every thing that is in man, as through an amazing act of submission to the divine will, through the exertion of a most disinterested regard to the divine glory, and to

to the happineſs of miſerable creatures, freely to conſent unto and to endure every kind and degree of ſuffering, which either the malice of men or devils could invent, or the vindictive wrath of GOD had demanded and denounced; I find all the powerful reaſonings of unbelief ſilenced, and bowing down before ſo great and aſtoniſhing an atonement, I am enforced to believe that juſtice is ſatisfied, and that even ſuch a ſinner as I have not that guilt lying upon me, which this ſuffering has not taken away by an ample ſatisfaction.—For theſe reaſons, and upon theſe foundations, I cordially and comfortably conſent unto the merit and efficacy of the ſufferings of my Lord; and do boldly declare my ſtedfaſt aſſurance, that *the blood of Jeſus Chriſt cleanſeth from all ſin*, and therefore that *whoſoever believeth in him ſhall not periſh, but have everlaſting life.*—But,

Fourthly, Beſides the firm perſuaſion of the ſufficiency of CHRIST'S ſufferings unto reconciliation, there are certain other conſequences ariſing therefrom, which do ſo ſtrongly preſent themſelves to my mind, that I cannot avoid feeling the force of them. As,

Firſt, Herein I am forced to ſee myſelf in a character no way agreeable to my pride; and therefore the more mortifying, becauſe I cannot doubt the truth of what I am, while I ſee the divine and holy JESUS ſuffering for me. Beholding theſe ſufferings, I am conſtrained to own that I am a ſinner, and a rebel; that far from having any claim upon GOD'S favour for the ſake of any thing I do, I am guilty altogether, a criminal condemned and ſentenced to die; that juſtice has demands upon me which I could not anſwer though I ſhould lie for ever in the bottomleſs pit; that in GOD'S ac-

count of me I am what, till the sufferings of CHRIST taught me, I was not wont to think myself, vile even to GOD's abhorring me, and miserable without power of helping myself. For what have I seen in the sufferings of my Lord? What but all this? He was *holy, harmless, separate from sinners*, yea *the well-beloved*, and *the only-begotten of the Father*. Wherefore then do I see justice exerting itself in putting thee to grief? Why is thy soul thus sorrowful? And why are they buffeting and scourging and crucifying thee? Thou hadst done no sin, all was for me. And what then am I? What a provoking sinner, that nothing but thy sufferings could appease the wrath of GOD gone out against me? The heir of hell, what an heir, that thy blood only could make satisfaction for me? O may I ever behold thy sufferings to the confusion of every high thought in me! may they serve as a glass to represent to me with increasing clearness my real vileness and desert! may every thought I have of thy agony and bloody sweat, thy cross and passion, and precious death, convince me more and more that I am nothing, that being lowly in mine own eyes I may render all the glory of my salvation unto thee, and that when I stand a pillar in the eternal house of thy Father and my Father through thy dying love, and behold thy glory, with the company of thy redeemed I may sing from the most humbled heart, *Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, be glory and dominion for ever and ever.*

Secondly, As the sufferings of CHRIST have taught me the truth of my own character, so have they helped me to a plainer discovery of the true character of sin.

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The infinite GOD I know can alone be acquainted with the whole sinfulness of sin; and it is only by what he has manifested concerning it that I could have conceived any thing of its sinfulness; for I plainly see, that, till I began to know GOD as he has made himself known, I saw nothing of the real sinfulness of sin. But when I began to take notice that sin was the occasion of death, which was the revelation of GOD's righteous justice against sin, I began also to be sensible there must be somewhat extremely base in sin which could provoke infinite goodness thus to rise up against his creatures. I considered the desolations that have been in the world, and saw sin more deformed. I beheld the daily bounties of GOD, and was struck with its ingratitude. I meditated on the endless damnation of sinners, and said in my heart, if GOD be not cruel, what must sin be? But when I turned my eyes on the sufferings of JESUS, then I saw plainly what a monster sin is. There the Majesty of GOD presented itself to my view as infinitely affronted by it, there justice appeared to me taking infinite vengeance upon it, and there holiness expressing an infinite detestation and abhorrence of it. There I saw the character of GOD and the character of sin together; where he shewed me what himself was, there he taught me what sin was also. In the sufferings of Immanuel he shewed me both. Without these I had never known what I do of his holiness and majesty, his justice and mercy; and without this knowledge I had never discovered the true sinfulness of sin, which I now plainly see to be evil in the very degree that I know GOD to be excellent. O mercy in GOD, to teach me the sinfulness of sin, by that very

means whereby he is reconciled to me a ſinner! had he taught it me any other way, the ſight of it had been deſpair and hell in my ſoul. But when he ſhews me ſin's vileneſs by the ſufferings of him who died to ſave me from the dreadful wages of it, he has taken an aſtoniſhing method of emboldening me to look on the holy, juſt, and avenging Majeſty of heaven without fear, though I am a ſinner, and yet to ſee ſin in ſuch colours of deformity as makes me lothe and deteſt it, and turn from it as from the face of a ſerpent. O may I ſee in this glorious glaſs more and more of its vileneſs! may I hate it with increaſing abhorrence! may I war againſt and crucify it with all my ſtrength! knowing it was ſin which crucified my LORD, without whoſe ſufferings it had ſunk me into the farthermoſt hell.

Thirdly, While by the ſufferings of JESUS I am made to ſee the exceeding ſinfulneſs of ſin, I am at the ſame time made ſenſible of the riches of GOD's love in the method he has taken for pardoning it. If I could never have known the real ſinfulneſs of ſin, had I not ſeen CHRIST dying for ſinners, much leſs could I have known the love of GOD, but by this very means. The goodneſs of GOD to his creatures his daily acts might have ſhewn me, but that he had any love for ſinners I could never have imagined if he had not told me it. Could I have conceived that a holy Governor of the world, caſt off by his creatures gone into rebellion againſt him, ſhould have any love towards them? But what eye had not ſeen, nor ear heard, neither had it entered into the heart of man to conceive, that GOD hath revealed, even that there is

mercy

mercy with him. Nay, not only mercy, but mercy in such a way as magnifies the gift it brings beyond all comprehension and our utmost astonishment. I see the LORD of glory leaving the Father's bosom, and, since sinners must be saved, making satisfaction to infinite justice. I see this. I see him suffering. I know it is the very Son of GOD. Sometimes while I contemplated myself, I have thought it impossible GOD should ever look upon me, such a sinner. And when again I have considered these sufferings, declared to be endured for such as I am, I have been ready to doubt on the other part through the very vastness of this mercy; can it be so? Is it possible GOD should stoop thus to sinners? That love which one while seemed incapable of reaching a case so wretched as mine, another while appeared too great to be believed. I sought the Scriptures. I read the history of JESUS. Here I was brought evidently to see that he was GOD manifest in the flesh, while as evidently I saw that he was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. The result was, I was amazed and satisfied. I could not deny the unspeakable gift. I saw and wondered. I said, what is GOD? How unsearchable are his ways? Who can find him out? How high his thoughts! I said also, What is man, that thou hast such respect unto him? What am I? GOD so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son; gave him to suffer, to die. Here, here, I said, is love. What love! O teach me to know this love which passeth all human knowledge! O it is a knowledge I long for! it is my life to know thee the true GOD, and JESUS CHRIST whom thou hast sent. Eternity will not suffice to fill up the

longings of my soul after this knowledge of thy love. —But,

Lastly, The sufferings of CHRIST have taught me the value of reconciliation with GOD. While I see these sufferings, and know whose sufferings they are, I am awfully instructed what it cost to redeem the soul of a sinner, and thereby how great the blessing of being reconciled to GOD. Here the demands of infinite justice upon sinners are set manifestly before me. I see what they are in the sufferings of my incarnate GOD. But here also I see the worth of the sacrifice, and proportionably of the benefit procured by it. These sufferings teach me the double blessing of being saved from wrath, and accepted to GOD's favour. To regard myself no longer as a condemned criminal, under sentence of death, and an heir of hell, but as a son of the LORD Almighty, whose sentence is reversed, and whose home is heaven; this is glorious. But what makes me eminently think it so, is the manner by which I am thus pardoned and acquitted, thus accepted and glorified. When I see my pardon procured and my peace made through the sufferings of the Lamb of GOD, this shews me the misery I have escaped, and the riches I am heir to, how tremendous the one, how valuable the other. O that Christless sinners would see here their misery! and that saints would learn from hence to make a right estimate of their privileges! See my fellow-sinners, who carelessly neglect this great salvation; see the amazing justice and vengeance of GOD, which stands out against you. Ye are not in CHRIST, therefore ye have no benefit from his sufferings. Ah, let his sufferings teach you what yours

shall

shall be. If God spared not his Son, will he spare you? If he bruised him and put him to grief, how will ye endure when the vials of his wrath shall be poured out upon your heads? If the sufferings of Jesus made him cry out, *Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me*; what will your cry be, when you shall be drinking to eternity the dregs of the cup of God's fury? O that ye would be wise! that now, while yet there is time, ye would flee from the wrath that is to come! And ye, my Brethren, who are fled to this glorious hope that is set before you, be sensible of the greatness of your privileges. Whatever they are, the sufferings of Jesus bought them for you. And let those sufferings declare their value. Ah, what a blessing that forgiveness of sins, which was so dearly bought! how valuable that peace with God, which cost so high a price! how inestimable that glory to come, which is the reward of the Redeemer's blood! See here what ye have in possession, and what ye are heirs to! Behold the sufferings of Jesus, and know your blessings, and despise the little things of the world. Behold the sufferings of Jesus, and let nothing trouble you, for surely eye hath not seen what his sufferings have purchased for you. *If need be, ye may be in heaviness through manifold temptations*, but look unto Jesus and behold your crown; *look unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith, who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is for ever set down on the right hand of the throne of God.* Yea, *consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be*, (and so doing ye will not be) *wearied and faint in your minds.*

SERMON XX.

ACTS xvi. 30, 31.

What must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.

WE have already treated of the sufferings of CHRIST, and considered the cause of them, and their efficacy to the purposes designed by them: and are now led on by the order of the Creed to his Crucifixion and Death.

As there was a necessity that he should suffer by crucifixion, to fulfil certain types and prophesies relative thereto; so was it also necessary that his crucifixion should issue in death, to the end that thereby atonement might be made for sin.

That he was indeed crucified, and that he died, are points, as to the fact, so fully set forth in the scriptures, and with the circumstances regarding the one and the other you are so well acquainted, that I need not take up your time in describing or proving either of them. What is principally designed in the profession of his crucifixion and death, is the benefits obtained thereby: for when I declare myself assured that the Son of GOD was crucified and died, I mean to profess my stedfast belief, that by this means all those ends for which he was crucified and died were effectually answered. Wherefore having shewn already wherein

in the merit and efficacy of these his sufferings unto death do consist, to wit, in the dignity of his person, his perfect righteousness, and the most eminent exercise of obedience in his last work of giving himself a sacrifice unto God; I am now to set out particularly the ends of his sufferings and death, and to introduce the professor as maintaining his stedfast belief that they are answered by them, when he says, he not only suffered under *Pontius Pilate*, but adds, *was crucified*, and *dead*. His meaning is to say, I believe,

First, That he not only was crucified and slain, but did thereby make a full propitiation and atonement for sin. I see, before *Adam* committed the sin of eating the forbidden fruit, the sentence of Death denounced against him, if he should transgress that commandment, *In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die*. Wherefore when I behold him eating of it, I plainly find him, bringing himself under the before-declared sentence. Here was an act of disobedience; that disobedience was highly offensive and dishonourable to the majesty of God; and the transgressor was become by it liable to death. In this situation what could he do? He could not undo what was done; that was impossible. The fact must stand against him for ever, *Thou hast eaten of the tree whereof I charged thee that thou shouldst not eat*. This would be true to eternity from the moment of his eating; and as long as it remained true, both the majesty of God would be offended by it, and the curse be upon *Adam* for it. From that moment he commenced a child of wrath, and so must have remained to eternity, for any the least power he had to help himself out of

it. The fact was irrevocable, therefore the offence and the punishment. And unless mercy interposed, and in such a way as to make amends for the offence, and to fulfil the curse, there was absolutely no more hope for him than for fallen angels. That I had been any way concerned in this fact of *Adam*, I could not have imagined, had not the Scriptures of GOD told me so; although in that ignorance I should have been utterly at a loss for the reason why myself and the whole world are born in sin, and manifestly under sentence of death. But now I see that these are penalties lying upon me and all men for the sin of *Adam*, and thereby that he stood as the representative of all his descendents. I can have no quarrel against this, without calling GOD's righteousness in question, for I see in fact the penalties of *Adam*'s sin are charged on me; nor do I see it any thing more inconsistent that I should suffer through the sin of one covenant-head, than that I should be accepted to GOD's favour through the righteousness of another. And besides this, I am fully sensible that in my own person I have been sinning after the similitude of *Adam*'s transgression, being disobedient to his command, and putting forth my hand unto that which the Lord forbad me. So that if before sin entered into the world, the sentence of death was pronounced against it, whenever and in whomsoever it should be found, I am sensible that every way I am liable to that sentence; that being a sinner before GOD, I have done such offence to the divine Majesty, and brought such a death on myself, as leave me, considered in myself, in an utterly undone, helpless, and hopeless condition. Nevertheless,

sinful,

ſinful, guilty, and condemned as I am, I have confidence towards GOD. I ſee full amends made to the injured Majeſty of GOD, and the ſentence of death fully executed in him, *who, though he had done no ſin, was made ſin for us, that we might be made the righteouſneſs of God in him.* I ſee the *Lamb without ſpot and blemiſh taking away ſin by the ſacrifice of himſelf.* I ſee *God purchaſing the Church with his own blood.* I ſee, and am ſatisfied. I am convinced and pleaſed that divine Majeſty has received an ample vindication. I tremble no more at the ſentence of death, when I behold the Son of GOD expiring on the croſs; while I am covered with confuſion at myſelf (but alas! too, too little) in the ſight of that amazing ſacrifice. Here I ſet my foot, and finding myſelf ſafe, I boldly aſk, *Who is he that condemneth? It is Chriſt that died.*—Nor is this propitiation and atonement for ſin, though indeed the foundation of all my other comforts, the only one that I draw from the crucifixion and death of CHRIST: for,

Secondly, Herein I ſee all my enemies vanquiſhed. I ſee my Lord hanging victoriouſly on the croſs, and conquering every adverſary. Here I ſee that *law of ordinances*, whoſe multiplicity, ſtrictneſs and expence were ſo burdenſome a yoke, which none were able to bear, aboliſhed in the fulfilment of all its deſign. When JESUS died, *the vail of the temple was rent from the top to the bottom.* Here I ſee the *moral law*, as a law of works for righteouſneſs, fulfilled in every tittle of its demands, and executed in every tittle of its curſe, and as no longer therefore breathing out threatnings againſt the tranſgreſſion of its

precept now impracticable by us, but changed into a pleasing rule of delightful obedience. Here I see the sting taken out of the hand of *death*. How horrible was his countenance wont to be! I heard the thunders of *Sinai* when he approached me. I saw the flashes of everlasting fire breaking out behind his back. I was dismayed. I cried for mercy. I looked upon the cross. I considered who hung there. My spirit revived within me. Turning to death I said, *Where is thy sting?* I saw, and was astonished. The scene was changed. His dart terrified no more. His countenance was smoothed. He smiled and seemed to say, I am thy friend. Here I see *hell* disappointed. Hell was waiting for all the race of mankind. The sentence was gone forth, and the place was prepared. The whole world was guilty without exception, and justice demanded recompence. JESUS would make atonement, and the stroke fell upon him. He died, and believers cannot perish. Here I see *the devil* dethroned. What can the accuser do, when GOD is reconciled? When the law condemns no more? When its penalty is executed to the full? When justice appears on the side of the sinner? See, Satan, the issue of thy rage and malice! in persecuting the Son of GOD to the death, thou hast been thy own destroyer. That very death has disarmed thee of all thy might, and even such a babe in CHRIST as I am is able to put thee to flight. Here I see *sin* receiving its deadly blow. It was laid upon him that had done no sin. He bore it to the cross. There it was crucified, brought to public shame, and the power of it taken away. *For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the*

the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Here finally I see *the world* subdued, the world in all its strength. JESUS had before defeated the attempts of worldly glory, pomp, wealth and ease; and now on the cross he stands the shock of worldly shame and suffering; this he indured, that he despised. The ingratitude of friends, the being forsaken of all men, the being singly exposed in the hands of implacable enemies to all that malice set on fire of hell could invent or cruelly execute, made no impression upon him. *Be of good cheer*, thou hadst said, *I have overcome the world.* Truth, LORD, I see it to be a vanquished enemy. Thus looking on the cross, I see all my adversaries put to confusion. But more than all this,

Thirdly, I see there the richest blessings purchased for me. There I see sin punished, and the sinner pardoned. There I see perfect reconciliation and peace with a holy GOD. There the adoption of children. There the purchase of the Spirit. There the freest intercourse opened between heaven and earth. There I see the foundation of all the Mediator's glory, and of all the plenteous blessings the church receives from him. To that I owe all my mercies here, and all my hope in glory. Had not JESUS died, I had been still a child of wrath, and bond-slave of sin. But he died, and making peace sent forth the Spirit; that blessed Spirit, who awakened me when I lay asleep in sin, explained to me from the very word of GOD, the precious benefits procured by a Redeemer's blood, converted

verted my heart unto GOD in the power of what he ſhewed me, and is daily comforting me in all my tribulations, and holding up my heart and my ſteps in my way to the heavenly *Zion* where I would be.

Such now is my meaning when I ſay he was crucified and dead. Thus I make my profeſſion of the atonement he made, the victories he atchieved, the bleſſings he procured, when having, as his office was, fulfilled all righteouſneſs, he bowed his gracious head, ſaid, *It is finiſhed*, and yielded up the ghoſt. Shall a Heathen centurion, who knew nothing of theſe glorious myſteries, when he ſaw but the manner of his ſuffering and death, and the ſigns that attended it, cry out with great fear, *Truly this was the Son of God?* And ſhall not I, who know him to be ſuch by a thouſand teſtimonies, ſee him ſubmitting to be crucified and ſlain for me, and am acquainted with all theſe valuable benefits which he has thereby obtained for me; ſhall not I with greater joy cry out and ſay, *Truly this was the Son of God?* Shall the ſun, the earth, the very dead bear teſtimony to the ſufferings and death of Immanuel, and I feel nothing? Can I once think or ſay, "he was crucified and dead," without adoration, and joy, and ſhame, and ſorrow? But,

Fourthly, I am well perſuaded that all my ſuppoſed belief of theſe great things done and obtained by the ſufferings and death of JESUS, would be but vain imagination, unleſs they had a ſuitable effect on my heart and life; and therefore, as an important part of my profeſſing his death, I do farther declare,

Firſt, That I judge it my bounden duty, that it is my deliberate choice, and that I am fully determined, his

his grace enabling me, *to live to him, who thus died for me.* I declare that *I am not my own, that I am bought with a price*; and I moſt earneſtly deſire and determine to lay myſelf out, and all that I have, according to his will, and for his intereſt and glory. My time and my abilities of whatever ſort, I value chiefly for this end; and as I know that I cannot have a more noble deſign in life, indeed that this is the whole deſign of my being what I am, ſo do I moſt cordially conſent unto ſuch a conduct as ſhall be honourable to him, and ſerviceable to the intereſts of his kingdom. Whereſoever his intereſts call me out to appear for him, there I determine to go at all adventures; and although I ſhould be alone in the midſt of the earth, although all others had forſaken him, and, as *Elijah* ſuppoſed was his caſe, I only was left to confeſs him, yet I would not deny the LORD that bought me, nor give any countenance to the ways of a wicked world, or encouragement to the kingdom of darkneſs. Let him uſe me as he pleaſes, I am his purchaſed poſſeſſion. I hear him ſaying with his own mouth, *He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me: and he that loveth ſon or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his croſs, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.* This I hear, and with it, in the full intent of the words, I ſincerely conſent; and beforehand I declare myſelf a traitor and a rebel, if in any thing I act contrary to them. So,

Secondly, I determine and declare, that I will not be moved from following my dying maſter by any manner or meaſure of ſufferings which may befal me for ſo doing. I expect to be a partaker of his ſufferings.

That

That I have not been more so is owing to my too sinful conformity with the world. I have been told that *all who will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution*; nor, though I live in a Christian country, do I judge the case thereby so far altered as to give me any ground of expectation that some way or other I shall not suffer for CHRIST's sake: for alas! I see this Christian country is in general but a part of that wicked world, which CHRIST assures me will hate the disciples as well as the Master before them. But, GOD enabling me, I will not be moved. I will follow my Master whithersoever he leads me, though whithersoever I go tribulations shall await me, yea though I should suffer the loss of all things. If it must be so, I will reckon the reproach of CHRIST greater treasures than the riches, the favour, or esteem of the world; nor can I think of forsaking him whatever it cost me, while I think of what it cost him to redeem my soul. Can I look upon the cross of CHRIST, and so fear the reproach of men and be afraid of their revilings, as to crucify him afresh, and put him to an open shame? Can I look upon the cross, and act over again the part of *Judas* to serve the purposes of my interest and ambition, or, like *Peter*, deny that I know him, lest I should share in his sufferings? No, I have sworn, and am stedfastly purposed, that I will not be ashamed of CHRIST crucified; and that, as a faithful soldier of his, I will manfully fight under his banner, though the world and the devil should be never so furiously in arms against me, and that I will continue so doing unto the end of my days, as I have any hope of meeting him with

with comfort when he shall appear on the clouds of heaven.—And besides this,

Thirdly, It is not less my desire and purpose to be always conformed to the likeness of his death in the daily crucifixion and mortification of all my corrupt affections. Shall I say, as the truth is, these would have brought me to the bottomless pit, unless JESUS had died for me; these are they which caused all his sufferings and all his shame! these more properly than any others were his betrayers and murderers! and when I have seen and said all this, shall I spare them, shall I give them entertainment, or deal gently with them? *They that are Christ's crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts.* His I profess myself; and I trust I shall give him this convincing proof of the sincerity wherewith I make this profession, that I am always at war with his worst enemies within my heart. I am not rash and unadvised in this determination. I have considered the cross of CHRIST, and have seen what brought him thither; and therefore stedfastly purpose against all those his murderers without reserve. I will yield to the pleadings of none of them. When I see I will deny them. Nay, and I will use every means of weakening their power, without sparing any manner of pains in doing so. And since I know them to be exceedingly subtle and deceiving, I will use every help, which either the word of GOD, or self-inquiry, or the observations of others can afford me, to bring them to light, that they may be crucified and slain, though they be as dear to me as an only son, or as useful as a right-hand. Thus living to JESUS, and suffering for him, and crucifying my sins, I desire to make that profession

good

good in my life, which I make with my mouth, when I say, I believe that he was crucified and dead.

And now, brethren, I think, we can hardly have failed of making some reflections upon the whole of this declaration as it has been going forward. I would ask, Is it scriptural or no? Are these things really contained in confessing the faith of CHRIST crucified? If they be not, or as far as they are not, pay no regard to them, and impute it to my weakness. But if they be the words of truth and soberness, can we adopt and make them our own? If we cannot, where is our faith in a crucified JESUS? Shall we judge that we believe in him as saving us by his blood, if we are indulging those very sensual, earthly, and devilish affections which were the real causes of that blood-shedding; if we would live to CHRIST were it not for the reproach or violence of men, but are, as it is, refusing to go forth bearing his reproach; if we are living to ourselves, and, far from considering what his honour and interests demand, are only considering and consulting our own; if we set no such value upon the blessings purchased by the death of CHRIST as we do on the vain riches, pleasures, and praise of the world; and, instead of rejoicing in the deliverance which CHRIST obtained upon the cross from all our enemies, are quietly subjecting ourselves to them, to the world, to sin; and if so, to the devil, and then surely to the curse of the law which is hell, and in the mean time to the fear of death? If this be our case, can we persuade ourselves that we believe in CHRIST crucified, or that we make any real account of his propitiation and atonement as poor, guilty, condemned criminals, who, but for an interest therein,

therein, must perish for ever? We cannot suppose it. We see plainly the contrary. But, alas! it is only while I am speaking that we think of it at all. You have seen your faces, I fear many of you, my dear friends: O forget not, I beseech you, what manner of men you are. See your deformity, see your misery, and betake you seriously to that blood to which, though you consider it not, you are daily indebted for GOD's patience and forbearance. I may well say, why will you die? since it is every way so evident that GOD hath no pleasure in your death. Happy they, who can make the profession before us, and whose hearts and lives prove the truth of it. Happy they every hour they live. Their sins are pardoned, their persons are accepted, the Lord Almighty is their Father, all things are theirs, Satan cannot hurt them, death is their friend, the Spirit their comforter, heaven their home, and they are hastening daily to it. Ah, who would not be able to say, "I believe in CHRIST crucified?"

SERMON XXI.

ACTS xvi. 30, 31.

What must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.

FROM our Lord's crucifixion and death we pass on to his *burial* and *descent into hell*. The history of the former in all its circumstances is plainly set forth

in

in the Evangelists, to whom I shall refer you for the truth and particulars of it. And as to the latter, without troubling you with the various opinions relative thereto, I shall be content to declare only what appears to be the true one, that the soul of JESUS being separated from his body by death, was conveyed, during the time of the separation, into such receptacles as the souls of other persons used to be, so that he underwent the whole law of death, as it became him to do who was made sin for us, his body lying in the grave, and his soul going to the place where the souls of men who die for their own sins are kept till the day of resurrection. In a word, that as he died, so he was in death just what other people are.

But the believer has other things in view than the bare acknowledgment of the fact, when he says, "I believe that he was *buried* and *descended into hell*."

First, He professes that CHRIST was both buried and did descend into hell, as well to declare his belief of the absolute certainty of his death, as thereby to prepare the way for his assent to the reality of his resurrection, which must be strictly and truly such, if his body was thus laid in the grave, and his separated soul departed to the place provided for the spirits of men when disunited from the body. The believer therefore means to declare his stedfast persuasion that JESUS was in every respect dead; not only crucified, but actually and perfectly dead, so that if afterwards he was alive again it was a proper resurrection. But this is not all his meaning. He intends to say farther and principally,

Secondly,

Secondly, That he condescended to this state of the dead in discharge of his office. This, as it was the lowest condition of his abasement, so was it not less necessary than any other of his actions. He was the representative of sinners; and as they were not only partakers of flesh and blood, but also because of sin under sentence of death, their soul and body to be torn asunder, *this* to return to the dust, and *that* to exist in a state separate from its old companion till the day of re-union; therefore it behoved him not only to make atonement for sin, and thereby to take away the eternal curse of the law, but also to submit to the farther humiliation of being for a season in the state of the dead both in body and soul. For a season I say; for there was not only an impossibility that he should be holden of death, and detained his prisoner as others are, because of the power of that divine nature in union with which both his body and soul did subsist, while the one was lying in the grave, and the other was descended into hell; but also there was no necessity for it, because justice being now satisfied, death had no right in him or claim upon him. And therefore, when he had lain in the state of death long enough to be in all things like unto us, after a short season he was loosed from the pains or rather bands thereof, to convince us that death was a vanquished enemy, which had no force nor right to detain him, who being the Son of GOD had taken away sin by the sacrifice of himself. Wherefore,

Thirdly, I am persuaded that he lay in the state of death in a peculiar way, not as one conquered by death, but as he, who having overcome upon the cross

him

him that had the power of death, went into the ſtate of the dead to take poſſeſſion as it were of the firſt-fruits of his victory. He lay in the ſtate of death indeed, that in every thing he might be like unto us; and while I ſee him in this eſtate, I acknowledge the horrid vileneſs of ſin which brought the LORD of glory to ſuch an abaſement: I confeſs myſelf to be ſinful duſt and aſhes; I own my utter inſufficiency to maintain myſelf againſt the approach of death, or to deliver myſelf out of his power, when he ſhall once have ſeized and carried me into his dark abodes: but though JESUS lay in the ſtate of the dead, it was to rob death of his terrors, to make it appear that now there is nothing ſo formidable in the laying down this earthly tabernacle in the grave, or in the ſoul's departure from the whole preſent ſtate of things into an untried, unknown, and unimagined kind of ſubſiſtence without the body in a ſpiritual world. In this ſtate of the dead my LORD made a ſhort continuance in his way to glory; he explored the depths of theſe manſions that wait for me; he made a viſit to the grave and hell; he went as a forerunner to let me ſee that though the way be dark it is not dreadful; he would go through it himſelf before me, that I might be reconciled to the paſſage by which I muſt go to everlaſting life; (he went as a conqueror to receive the ſubmiſſion and the homage of this old king of terrors even in his own dominions.) When at any time I forget my Lord was buried and deſcended into hell, I find ſomething more than awful in the thought of my *body*'s being laid in the grave, eaten up by worms, and mouldering to duſt; and I am ready to ſay to my *ſoul*, to what unknown condition wilt thou be

be transported when thou must leave the things that are here for ever? Wilt thou be reduced to nothing? or wilt thou wander up and down at the will of other more powerful spirits, visiting tombs, and hovering about the solitary places where bodies sleep? Or what else will become of thee? But when I see JESUS in the state of death, I am reconciled and perfectly set at ease. I cry out, Grave, where is thy victory? I say, My Redeemer was buried and descended into hell, and I will securely venture where he has gone before me; though I know not what it is to die, though the grave and hell import a state wherewith I am utterly unacquainted, yet will I cheerfully enter the unexperienced regions of the dead, and fear no evil from a state of being which my Saviour, by his presence therein, has vindicated from possibility of misery. But,

Fourthly, While I thus declare my belief of CHRIST's burial and descent into hell in the execution of his mediatorial office, and to make the way to heaven safe and comfortable, I profess my obligation and purpose of being conformed hereunto.

First, In an acknowledgement of the vanity of my present estate.

Secondly, In a daily dying to this present life.

Thirdly, In preparing myself for the approaching state of separation.

First, When I profess that CHRIST was buried and descended into hell as my representative, I mean to acknowledge the vanity of my present estate. Pride did once persuade me to think myself something. It suggested to me the health, the vigour, the comeliness of my body; it whispered to my foolish heart the more

noble qualifications of my reasonable powers, my parts, and wisdom, and knowledge; it insisted on various things that distinguished me from others, and intimated that I was lord of the creatures. Fired with the too pleasing thought, I conceited myself considerable, and was restless to be more so. I would make a figure; I would not remain destitute of any reputable qualification, I would enlarge my circumstances, I would have wherewith to take my full range of ease and pleasure. I said, when I shall have obtained such additions, and disengaged myself from such restraints, I shall have the full desire of my heart. Thus was I borne along by the pride of life, depending altogether upon the supposed sufficiencies of this present world, when Providence brought death before me by taking off a dear relation. I attended the dying bed. The sight shook my confidence, I saw the labouring body panting for breath, the whole frame shattered even to the loss of every sense, and heard the expiring groan. I retired in confusion, and was forced to say, Surely man is vanity! what profit or help can the world afford against death? I felt the meaning of these awful words, *What is man that is a worm, and the son of man that is a worm?* I said, I will be wise, I will consider my latter end. My friends came about me; with a decent civility they lamented my loss, said something of the departed, and fell into ordinary conversation for diverting my grief. I thought the discourse unseasonable, the views I had before me could not permit me to relish it. They departed, and others supplied their place with the same mistaken kindness. The last ceremonies for the dead passed over; I returned to my former

former employments. Insensibly my eyes closed to the thought of death, and the world began to recover its former importance. Just then mercy interposed. A thought I know not how forced itself upon me, that death was the wages of sin. It lay upon my mind. It would not be removed. Death seemed near, and I saw sin was the only cause of it. It came so mightily upon me, that I was driven to my knees. I grew uneasy. I took the Bible. Every word I read condemned me. I could see nothing behind me but sin; and death stood threatning to cut me down. I plainly saw my misery and helplessness. Wherewith could I possibly come before the LORD? I soon found there was no help for me but in GOD. But would GOD have mercy upon me? I had heard of JESUS, and had a thousand times called him my Saviour; but now I found that I had never believed him to be the Saviour he is. Yet I knew there was no help for me but in him. I was satisfied that I must search the Scriptures which testify of him. I did so both with diligence and importunate prayer. From that blessed book the light shone upon me. I saw there that he was Son of GOD, and grew by degrees acquainted with the purpose of his coming into the world. The more I knew of this amazing method for saving sinners, the more I admired and liked it. I saw the import and meaning of all the actions of JESUS, his life and death, his resurrection from the state of death, and exaltation to the right hand of GOD. These shewed me my real character as well as GOD's. Here I have seen, and do see myself a sinner, a criminal, a wretch consigned to the dominion of death, and by death to be delivered

over to judgment and hell. Hence I have learnt to judge what the world is, and every man in it. In my continual thoughts I follow my Redeemer from heaven to the cradle, from the cradle to the croſs, from thence to the grave and hell, and all for my ſalvation, and cry out in the bottom of my ſpirit, what then is man? O what a lie is pride? And where are all the ſufficiencies of the world? I ſay to my ſoul, The Lord of glory took on him thy eſtate to ſave thee, and ſee whither it has brought him, low as the very grave and Hades. See, my ſoul, ſee the truth of thy condition. It is this teaches me what I could never learn from the death of thouſands about me, from all the uncertainties and vexations of life, from all the reaſonings with which philoſophy could furniſh me, nay which I never knew from all the Scriptures of GOD, till I learnt from them the meaning of CHRIST's death, burial, and deſcent into hell. Here I learnt the vanity, the miſery of myſelf and the world. Here all my pride bows, and I feel myſelf to be nothing, and all the pomp of life to be a dream and deluſion. Wherefore,

Secondly, Knowing as I thus do the vanity of my preſent eſtate, I profeſs it my duty, and declare that it is and ſhall be my daily endeavour to die unto it. I look on myſelf as in the grave with CHRIST. I acknowledge the import of my baptiſm, and regard myſelf as *buried with him* therein *into death*. That burial I purpoſe, GOD enabling me, to make good. I am dead to ſin by profeſſion, being buried with him; nor can I any farther engage my heart in the purſuits of this preſent life. I have determined therefore, as one buried with JESUS, to live the reſt of my time upon earth

earth in the conſtant mortification of every earthly affection. I will look upon my maſter lying in the grave, and ſay, LORD, I will die with thee. My life is at thy diſpoſal, take it when thou pleaſeſt, when thou needeſt, for thy intereſt and glory. And while thou ſuffereſt me to be here, ſtill will I die with thee; for as one dead I have renounced the world. As if I were already laid in my grave, I will endeavour to diſregard the pleaſures, the intereſts, the praiſe, the honours of life. O take me more abundantly out of this preſent evil world, and faſhion my heart and life into a greater conformity to thy death and burial. Enable me increaſingly to die to the things of ſight and ſenſe; to uſe the world as not abuſing it; to be content in every ſtate; to enjoy the bleſſings of life with a greater indifference and readineſs to part with them at thy will; to endure every kind of affliction, eſpecially for thy ſake, with enlarging patience and thankfulneſs; to fear always, and peculiarly in every change of condition; to ſit more eaſy to good as well as to evil report; to be more diſengaged from the men as well as things of the world; to get farther above the influence of worldly example and man's authority, the apprehenſion of poverty and the dread of depending on others; and grant that I may be able to prove more and more the truth of this my death thro' the Spirit to every preſent thing by the meekneſs, the forbearance, the peaceableneſs, the liberality, the contentedneſs, the abſence of all carefulneſs for the morrow manifeſt in my whole conduct. LORD, I would be perfectly buried with thee; I would have the whole ſpirit of a pilgrim here upon earth. Like one ſeeking another country I

would live. O let me have the whole proof of thy burial in my heart and life. And let me teſtify my belief of thy burial and deſcent into hell by ſuch a temper and conduct as ſhall convince thoſe who obſerve my converſation, that there is a power in thee as it were lying in the grave to raiſe the ſouls of thy people above the love of every thing great, and the dread of every thing terrible here below; and to force the world of unbelievers to own, that there is that in thy Religion which can make a man even in the abundance of all things to deſire to depart and be with thee as far better. Thus do I determine, endeavour, and pray to die daily unto this preſent life, as buried with thee. And,

Thirdly, In conformity with thy lying in the ſtate of the dead, I would be preparing for my approaching ſtate of ſeparation. I determine to regard, and deſire to treat this *body* of mine as under ſentence of death, as ſoon to depart into the grave where my LORD alſo lay. Wherefore I am reſolved to bring it under and keep it in ſubjection, that in none of its appetites it may have the indulgence, which I well know it will be always craving. I will endeavour to maintain it in the ſtricteſt temperance, nor will I give it any allowance of ſloth or exceſs. I will no more pamper it with gluttonous or luxurious living, nor yield to any of its ſolicitations for gratification in drink, nor ſuffer it to defile my ſoul with its laſcivious inclinations. I will be continually putting it in remembrance, that it had a principal hand in the firſt ſin, that it has led me into numberleſs iniquities, that it is ſoon to return to the duſt out of which it was taken, and, were it not for JESUS, that it would lie for ever in the flames that

never ſhall be quenched. I will prepare it as I can for the departing hour, and reconcile it to the expectation of being laid in the grave by the conſideration of CHRIST's burial. In a word, it ſhall be waiting for the change, and taught to meet it without drawing back.

And for my *ſoul*, it ſhall be my endeavour that it be every day more and more furniſhed for the world of ſpirits. To enter into that inviſible world nothing but holineſs I am well aſſured can prepare me. I will not therefore ſay, Soul, thou haſt grace enough already to qualify thee for a happy departure; but, ſoul, the day is at hand, put on the whole armour of light. Thou muſt ſoon go into the inviſible world, if thou have not faith thou wilt not be bold to adventure when the hour of departure comes; nor muſt every meaſure of faith be ſufficient, but thy faith muſt be fruitful, it muſt make thee love GOD and man; yea, and thy faith and love muſt be ſuch as will make thee full of the hope of glory. Now therefore, forget what is behind, and reach unto what is before. Thou muſt be adding grace unto grace. Thou muſt be living a great deal more in heaven. My ſoul, thou muſt not be weary in well doing; if thou wilt reap, thou muſt not faint. CHRIST went unto the place of ſeparate ſpirits; art thou ready, art thou willing to go thither alſo? What? Art thou not yet prepared? Art thou deſiring a farther reſpite? Then be diligent, make all things ſure. Art thou afraid of going into the untried eſtate, where ſpirits only dwell? Think more of CHRIST's deſcent. Be more perſuaded there is no danger in the way he trode before thee. Have it more upon thy heart, that

this is the only way to heaven. To day, said CHRIST to the thief, thou shalt be with me in paradise: and wilt thou be afraid of being in paradise also? Thus am I determined to exercise myself in body and soul-preparing for my state of separation. And were I not thus employed, I could not persuade myself that I had any real belief of CHRIST's burial and descent into hell in the discharge of his office, and as the representative of believers.

You see here what is the real meaning of this, as you have before, of the former points of faith. And if the article before us mean all this, may we not well take up CHRIST's words and say, *When the Son of man cometh shall he find faith on the earth?* Be pleased to observe that the end of hearing Sermons is not to pass an hour in what is called a good way, but that we may enter into the reproofs, the corrections, the instructions that are ministered to us. GOD expects therefore we should consider that we have heard this day, examine ourselves by it, lay it up in our hearts, and be the better for it. Let us look to it, I beseech you, for GOD will not be mocked. And it is easy to see who will be the losers in the end, if we will not take heed how we hear.—"Give us grace, therefore, O LORD, seriously to consider before thee what we have heard from thee; and grant, that as we are baptized into the death of thy blessed Son our Saviour JESUS CHRIST, so by continual mortifying our corrupt affections we may be buried with him, and that through the grave and gate of death we may pass to our joyful resurrection, for his merits, who died and was buried, and rose again for us, thy Son JESUS CHRIST our Lord."

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SERMON XXII.

ACTS xvi. 30, 31.

What must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.

THE argument, upon which faith in JESUS as an all sufficient Saviour does stand stedfast and unshaken, lies in the united efficacy of his qualifications and transactions. Knowing him to be CHRIST, the only Son of the Father, our LORD; and knowing also that he has done, is doing, and will do, all that the glory of GOD in the salvation of us his fallen creatures could require, we remain satisfied that he is *able to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by him.* We have been for some time considering the latter part of this argument, and bringing forth the grounds of fact upon which, in concurrence with the qualifications of JESUS, we rest assured of his being JESUS a Saviour. And now proceed in that view to his resurrection from the dead.

We have seen him as the man of sorrows, and have attended him to the cross, the grave, and Hades. Henceforward we are to view him in a more splendid character, to see his divine nature displaying itself in a more glorious manner, and his human nature highly exalted, his reasonable soul enriched with all knowledge and grace possible to a creature, his body spiritualized and glorified, and his whole person advanced to the highest honour at the right hand of GOD.

That circumstance of his exaltation which relates to his *resurrection* is now to be considered. Concerning which our believer proceeding in his profession would be understood to mean,

First, I am satisfied of it as an unquestionable matter of fact, proved to be such by the most inconteſtable evidence, that both JESUS did rise again from the dead, and also that he did so on the third day according to the Scriptures. *As Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so was the Son of man to be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.* But *his soul was not to be left in hell, neither his flesh to see corruption.* And I have the most undoubted testimony that on the third day he actually rose from the dead; for on the third day in the morning the women cannot find him in the sepulchre, an angel assures them he is risen from the dead, presently they see him alive, as do his Disciples in a body that very evening, unto whom then, and frequently afterwards, he gives the most evident proofs, that it is he himself, not a spirit, but that very same person whom they so well and familiarly knew upon long acquaintance; that same body which they knew had been crucified and left in death now again joined unto that same soul which before informed it. Nor is there wanting a standing testimony of fact to the truth of his resurrection unto this very day. For if he be not risen from the dead, he cannot be in heaven; but yet that Holy Ghost, who was promised solely upon his going to the Father, was not only poured out in miraculous gifts on the Apostles and others, but on them and all believers since in all sanctifying operations, as the declared

clared consequence of his life and dominion at the right hand of GOD. He rose from the dead. And no wonder, since even while dead he was the Son of GOD; the union of the two natures still subsisted, and though the two parts of the human nature were separated, yet neither part was for one moment disunited from the divine. Wherefore I do not say, he *was raised* from the dead, (although raising the dead be evidently a work of divine power) but he *rose* from the dead, as being possessed of that divine power in himself whereby he rose. Nor, although I find his resurrection ascribed to the Father, have I reason therefore to question that he raised himself, since I find him taking this work unto himself in these plainest words of his, *Destroy this Temple*, (speaking of his body) *and in three days I will raise it up*. Acknowledging therefore the unity of the eternal Trinity, I find myself under no difficulty to say, he rose again from the dead, while also I say, GOD the Father effected and wrought that work—Thus I declare myself perfectly satisfied of the truth of this important action. But this is not all my meaning: for when I say, "He rose again the third day from the dead," I do,

Secondly, Intend to express my belief of certain glorious benefits which are hereby held forth and secured to me. For hereby I plainly see, not only that he is the Son of GOD, evidently approving himself such by this divine act of rising from the dead, but that as the Son of GOD rising from the dead in the discharge of his office he has made the most public declaration,

First, Of the justification of the ungodly by his death.

Secondly, Of his being Lord of all things.

Thirdly, Of the resurrection of all the members of his body. Wherefore,

First, When I say, He rose again the third day from the dead, I profess my belief of there having thereby been made the most public declaration of the justification of the ungodly by his death. He died for our sins. And the way whereby I am assured that, by the sacrifice of his death, he took away sin in respect of its guilt and punishment is, that I see him rise again from the dead: because, inasmuch as I know that death is the wages of sin, I am assured he could not have risen again from the dead unless by his death he had made satisfaction to the justice of GOD for sin, whereof death was purely the wages. I know him to be a public person, that he undertook for sinners, putting himself in their place; and that our sins with all their consequences were imputed to him. But now I see him who thus was made sin for us risen from the dead. Hereupon, I ask myself, was not death one of the consequences of our sins? And if it was, how is it that I see him that was charged with our sins rising out of the grave? Could this possibly be if the atonement had not been satisfactory? This I dare not deny unless I would assert that he was not made sin for us, (in which case I could not find the least imaginable cause of his death) or unless I would insist that death was not a consequence of sin. Wherefore when I see JESUS alive from the dead, I discern the most public testimony of GOD the Father to the availableness of his satisfaction, and JESUS not only proclaiming publicly the justification of ungodly sinners, but also, as it were, by a legal procedure, when he had satisfied

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the demands that juſtice had againſt them, taking out their acquittal. Thus I declare my belief of his riſing again for our juſtification; and while I cannot queſtion the reality of his reſurrection, I have ſuch an anſwer at hand to the accuſations of conſcience as ſilences them all. In the ſight of all my numberleſs iniquities, the penalty of the leaſt of which is death, I take up my word, and ſay, *It is Chriſt that died, yea rather that is riſen again. It is God that juſtifieth, who is he that condemneth?* I think it now no longer ſtrange, that the whole office of the Apoſtles is declared to be this one thing, "to witneſs the reſurrection:" for if it be true that he roſe from the dead, it cannot but be evident that he is the Son of GOD, that by his death there had been made full propitiation for ſin: conſequently that in his name, and his only, there is ſalvation.

Secondly, I regard the reſurrection of JESUS as a no leſs public declaration of his being Lord of all things. He was indeed not put into public poſſeſſion of dominion over all things till he ſat down at the right hand of GOD. But before this he plainly ſhewed by his reſurrection his power over all things. When by his ſacrifice on the croſs he had made ſatisfaction for ſin, it remained only that he ſhould take poſſeſſion of his conqueſts, and proceed to lead his enemies captive. The two firſt of theſe were the grave and hell. Into them the conqueror enters, and riſing from thence declares them vanquiſhed. "See," he ſays, as it were by this action, "the firſt fruits of my victory. I was dead and am alive again. It was declared in my name of old, *O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy deſtruction*; and behold the fulfilment of this

word in my resurrection from the dead. See then if I am not the Lord, who have all power in heaven and earth. It is I that have the keys of death and hell; I took them by my might out of the hands of him that had the power of death." Yea, Lord, my soul replies, I acknowledge thy dominion. As the only-begotten of the Father, thou art Lord of all things by the right of Deity; and here I see thee in the mediatorial character, eminently proving thy dominion over all things. I see thee, in despite of Satan, strengthened as he was by the curse of the law, going down and leading death captive. I ask, who is this that cometh up from the grave? This whom death cannot detain? Who by his arm bursts asunder the gates of darkness, and brings death disarmed of his scythe forth from his black dominions? What man, what GOD is this! He must be man to be capable of rising, and GOD to rise by his own power. And if he died and rose again, (and what marvel if he did die that he should rise again?) he must needs be Lord of both the dead and the living. I own thy dominion. With *Thomas*, I, alas too slow of heart to believe, cry out upon the force of such conviction, *My Lord, and my God!* I yield myself to thy dominion. O keep me by thy matchless power. Keep me from the curse of the law which thou hast taken away by bearing it; keep me from the rage of Satan whom thou hast vanquished; keep me till death, and keep me in death, my departed spirit in paradise during its state of separation, and my body, when it shall be reduced to its original dust, unto the day of resurrection; and then, thou Lord of all things, bring me forth, soul and body, from the state of

of death to glory and life, according to the working whereby thou art able even to subdue all things unto thyself: for I declare thee to be, what by thy resurrection thou hast declared thyself, Lord of all. And,

Thirdly, I avouch in *thy* resurrection, that of all the living members of thy body. This thou as the head didst declare when thou didst rise from the dead. Are they real members of thy body, actually joined unto thee? And how then couldst thou rise from the dead, and they not be risen with thee and in thee? Art thou only risen for thyself? or was it thy whole design in rising to assure that there shall be a resurrection of the dead? Didst thou not rise as the representative and head of thy people? And if so, does not thy resurrection declare them risen with thee? Thou art risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept. What meaneth this? Are first-fruits only an assurance of an harvest ready at hand, are they not even parts of it? Else how were they first-fruits? Thou didst not die nor rise again to thyself. Thou didst die for us, and when thou camest out of thy grave didst declare us risen in thee. I know that thou art alive from the dead, and believing in thy name I know that I am joined to thee, and therefore risen with thee. We know that our Redeemer liveth; and we know for that reason his people are as surely risen with him as if they had already heard the sound of the last trumpet, and he had now fashioned their vile body like unto his glorious body. They must pass through the grave, and after their flesh worms shall destroy this body, yet JESUS by his resurrection declares them already risen in him. O how unspeakable the benefit

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and the comfort of this faith! Did I not experience the power of my Lord's resurrection in the influence it has upon me, and the comfort it gives me certainly to know that I am risen with CHRIST, I should certainly conclude that I did not truly believe that he was risen from the dead. As an important part therefore of my profession, when I say, I believe that he rose again the third day from the dead, I mention this my stedfast belief of my being risen with him, wherein I avow my obligation of conformity to his life, and the cause I have to triumph in this belief against the fear of death.

First, Believing that we are risen with CHRIST I avow my obligation of conformity to his life. As one risen with CHRIST, it is my duty, my desire, and my purpose to seek those things which are above, and to set my affections on them, and not on things on the earth. I would be continually reflecting, how one who is risen with CHRIST to a spiritual and eternal world, ought to live while he is here upon earth? What should be his views, his ruling objects, his aim, and pursuit; what he should renounce and what cleave to, to what he should sit indifferent and what he should value, what he should fear and what he should desire. I would be often thinking within myself, were a man really risen from the dead, as we now only are in our representative, what would be his employment? What thoughts would he have of GOD, and of JESUS, and what of the world? And I would be endeavouring to draw my spirit and conduct into an increasing conformity with the same, as far as my circumstances in this life should possibly permit. I would

would live in the world as taken out of it, and though I am not in heaven I would live as if I were in it. I would have my mind under the influence of GOD's presence as if I were standing at his right hand, and I would by faith behold the glory of JESUS as if I saw him upon the throne of his glory I would have my heart delighting in the worship and service of GOD as if I was joining in the anthems of heaven, and my soul stood ready like the angels to do GOD's commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word; I would love others as if I were placed in the mansions of the blessed; I would live to the glory of GOD, as if there were none around me but his most dutiful servants; I would have every sensual, earthly, and deviliſh desire dead in me, as if I were numbered among the spirits of just men made perfect; I would regard the world as if I was in heaven, neither debauched by its gratifications, nor distressed by its adversities; I would be pleasing GOD in all things as they do in heaven, myself in nothing, nor those who are about me but for their good to edification; and in all things I would be pleasing GOD with a heavenly cheerfulness; I would yield to no worldly bias, nor consult my ease, or interest, or indulgence any more than if I was lying in the bosom of *Abraham*; to say all in a word, I would be just like CHRIST, *as he was so would I also be in the world.* As risen with him I would esteem nothing in the world but for the use I might make of it to the glory of GOD, and the happiness of my neighbours; I would lay myself out in doing good, nor count my life of any consequence but as it might serve these best of purposes. Thus would

would I have my converſation in heaven as being riſen with CHRIST. I would, but alas, how do I fail! yet this is my deſire, my aim, my endeavour. And though in every thing I come ſhort, yet ſtill I am determined to preſs on, to give no ground willingly to my ſpiritual enemies, nor to give out in diſcouragement (though after all I am nothing) but he labouring to grow into a greater conformity with the life of JESUS. Give me leave to interrupt the profeſſor one moment, while I obſerve that theſe are his real deſires under the influence of faith in a riſen Redeemer; and how different they are from the proſpects and purpoſes of thoſe, whoſe hearts are given up to the pleaſures of the world, and the pride of life, is too obvious to need any illuſtration. O what a wide diſtance is there between a ſtate of unbelief and of faith! but to proceed,

Secondly, Our believer avows the cauſe he has to triumph againſt the fears of death in the belief of his being riſen with CHRIST. Is CHRIST riſen from the dead, he ſays, and are we riſen with him? Is he, who died for our ſins, riſen again for our juſtification? Hereby is the reſurrection of true believers put out of queſtion. And can we not effectually riſe with CHRIST till we are paſſed through the grave whither he went before us? Then ſurely I ſee the ſting of death taken out. Is death formidable becauſe it is the wages of ſin? But JESUS declared the juſtification of believers, and publicly took out their acquittal, by riſing from the dead. But do we ſtill fear, becauſe death is a ſtate of ſeparation, an unknown and untried ſtate, from whence no one hath come to give

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an account of it, and whereof it has not pleaſed GOD to give us any particular information in the Scriptures, and concerning our deliverance out of which many diſtreſſing apprehenſions are apt to ariſe? Yet ſtill the reſurrection of JESUS will bear us out here alſo. For where is JESUS? He is not in the grave, he is riſen, and is alive, and liveth for evermore. The comfort is that we are riſen with him. And if he be riſen and we with him, then the darkneſs of the paſſage, or any thing elſe relative to that ſtate, need not make us afraid. Here I ſee ſupport againſt death as the wages of ſin, and death as the laying down of theſe earthly tabernacles; even in this one word, "CHRIST is riſen from the dead. Why then art thou ſo heavy, O my ſoul, and why art thou ſo diſquieted within me?" Why doth death appear ſo terrible? Is it becauſe thou art not willing to part with the world? No, not ſo. Is it then that thou art afraid of the conſequences? Wherefore? Becauſe of ſin? But ſee here CHRIST has proved *that* to be taken out of the way. Or is it becauſe thou knoweſt not what death is, and what ſhall come after it? But ſay not that neither, my ſoul, for thou art riſen with CHRIST, and heir to all that he inherits; and wouldſt thou deſire a better eſtate than to be with him where he is? Doſt thou really believe CHRIST is riſen? Think then of that; be ſtrong in that faith; weigh well the import of his reſurrection; and thy fears will aſſwage, death will loſe his terrors, and thou wilt be ready to cry out, *Death, where is thy ſting?* Or rather with the great apoſtle, *I deſire to depart and to be with Chriſt, which is far better.* Loſe not, my ſoul, the comfort of believing.

lieving. Let thy faith in a risen JESUS raise thee to a newness of life; and then stagger not through unbelief, for as surely as CHRIST is risen from the dead, he rose for thy justification, and thou art risen with him.

Let us conclude the whole with the Collect for *Easter-day. Almighty God, who through thy only-begotten Son Jesus Christ, hast overcome death, and opened unto us the gate of everlasting life; we humbly beseech thee, that as by thy special grace preventing us thou dost put into our minds good desires, so by thy continual help we may bring the same to good effect, through Jesus Christ our Lord; who liveth and reigneth, with thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end.* Amen.

SERMON XXIII.

ACTS xvi. 30, 31.

What must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.

HAVING considered CHRIST in his resurrection from the dead, we are next to follow him to his *ascension into heaven.*

By *heaven* here is to be understood both a place and a state. A place it must needs be; for the body of our Lord was taken away from this earth. *While he blessed his Disciples, he was parted from them, and carried.*

ried up into heaven; from earth to heaven, from the place where he then was, to that where he now is; to a place *far above the heavens*, above the region of the clouds, which is the firſt heaven, to that which is called the heaven of heavens, wherever it be, the moſt glorious place of GOD's manifeſtation of himſelf to his creatures. And as a place, ſo a ſtate. A ſtate of the higheſt glory and bleſſedneſs: for *we ſee Jeſus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the ſuffering of death, crowned with glory and honour.*

That he aſcended into heaven we have the moſt aſſured teſtimony. For the Holy Ghoſt witneſſes, that *While they beheld he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their ſight.* He did not vaniſh as an apparition, but while they were looking upon him, he was taken up, a cloud, namely, the Shechinah or glory of the Lord, the viſible ſymbol of divine preſence, covering him about, and carrying him up leiſurely into heaven, ſo that they might ſee him going up, till he and it were gone beyond the reach of their ſight. Nor is there only the teſtimony of the Diſciples to this truth; for *While they looked ſtedfaſtly toward heaven, as he went up, behold, two men ſtood by them in white apparel; which alſo ſaid, Ye men of Galilee, why ſtand ye gazing up into heaven? This ſame Jeſus, which is taken up from you into heaven, ſhall ſo come in like manner, as ye have ſeen him go into heaven.* If there be ſtill farther need of witneſs, the truth of his aſcenſion is manifeſt from his ſending the Holy Ghoſt. Upon this ground he himſelf places the neceſſity of his going to heaven; *If I go not away, the comforter will not come unto you: but if I depart, I will*

will send him unto you. And soon after his departure the comforter did come unto them; than which there cannot be a more evident proof that he was indeed ascended to heaven unto the Father.

But however true the fact be, yet this is not all the professor has in view, but he means to declare his belief also of the force, import, and influence of such truth, when he says, *He ascended into heaven.* For,

He would be meant to understand and declare, that JESUS ascended into heaven in a public character, as the representative and head of his members. He believes they are no less ascended into heaven with him, than risen from the dead in him. His actions, he knows, are all public, for otherwise he sees not why the Son of GOD should come into the world. And therefore,

First, When he says, He ascended into heaven, it is as if he said, I profess my belief that thereby he opened the gate of everlasting life for his people. He went away into heaven, into the more immediate presence of GOD. Sin had shut us out from an earthly paradise, JESUS takes possession of an heavenly one for us. *I go to prepare a place for you:* not for myself only, but for you also. *Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.* True it is that *your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you.* Ye are not now in that *presence where is fulness of joy*, nor admitted to be at his *right hand, where there are pleasures for evermore.* But I have made the atonement, your sins are blotted out; and behold, *I ascend*, in the merit of what I have done for you, and in your name and behalf,

half, *unto my Father*, and therefore now *your Father, and unto my God and your God. And I go to prepare a place for you: and if I go away I will come again, and take you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also.* Thus he spake while on earth, and I see him verifying his word when he went away into heaven. The gates lift up their head, the everlasting doors were lift up, and the King of glory, the Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle, came in. He came in, he set the doors of heaven wide open, he gave us boldness and liberty to enter into the holiest by the new and living way which he hath consecrated for us. When I ask myself, where is JESUS? And answer, he is passed into the heavens, I see my nature exalted to the very place and state where I could wish it to be; heaven taken possession of, mortality swallowed up of life, the last hand put to the work of redemption, and that nothing now remains for the exalted JESUS to do but to make his people partakers of all his victories and triumphs; in short, I see in the ascension of the head the full and glorious ascent of the members, according to the prophecy relative to him, and to them in him: *The breaker is come up before them; they have broken up, and have passed through the gates, and are gone out by it; and their King shall pass before them, and the Lord at the head of them.* But,

Secondly, While I thus profess my belief of CHRIST's ascent into heaven in a public character to open a way thither for his people, and to prepare a place for them, I do farther understand, that in so doing he led captivity captive. By his ascension he evidently triumphed

umphed over all our enemies that before had dominion over us, and moſt plainly led them as vanquiſhed foes behind the chariot in which he went up to his glory. By this glorious act he fully explained his victory. It is no longer in any meaſure uncertain whether the curſe of the law be ſatisfied, death be deſtroyed, Satan be vanquiſhed, hell be diſappointed; for our ſurety, that undertook for us to deliver us from the hands of all theſe formidable adverſaries, into ſubjection unto whom ſin had brought us, has, manifeſtly, prevailed. Moſt unqueſtionably he ſatisfied the curſe of the law, and thereby wreſted their arms out of the hands of death, Satan and hell: for inſtead of lying under the curſe of the law, and therefore in the ſtate of death within the dominions of him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and reſerved in that ſtate unto the blackneſs of darkneſs for ever, which muſt have been his caſe had he not anſwered the demands which the law had againſt him as our ſubſtitute; I ſee him in deſpite of death, the devil and hell, going up into heaven. In defiance of death he lives, in defiance of the powers of the air he paſſed through, in defiance of hell he went up into heaven. Yea, when he aſcended up on high, he proclaimed his victories over them all, and made them all a ſpectacle to angels and to men. Nor is this all. I underſtand,

Thirdly, That *by aſcending up on high he received gifts for men.* He not only went up *to prepare a place for us*, but alſo to open an intercourſe between heaven and earth, by receiving gifts neceſſary to prepare us for heaven and to bring us thither. Theſe he went up to receive. His preſence was neceſſary to his receiving them;

them; *If I go not away, the comforter will not come unto you.* He went up to receive the Spirit in his own person in all fulness for men, that he might give unto them. To receive gifts for men, yea, for the rebellious, he ascended into heaven, that the Lord GOD might dwell among them. Sin had stopt the course of divine communications, the Spirit had been grieved and was withdrawn; the issue was, the world lay in wickedness, and darkness covered the earth. The Son of GOD will restore the fellowship. He becomes man, and takes away sin by the sacrifice of himself. He carries that manhood into heaven. In it he receives the fulness of the Spirit, the condition of receiving which he had fulfilled on the cross. Out of it he gives. And thus the communication is opened, the Lord GOD dwells among us again. This we owe to his ascension. He went up to receive; and he received to give. Had he not received and given, what had I been this day? My eyes had been still blinded by the god of this world. I had not known GOD; I had lived without him in the world. He gave Prophets, Apostles, Evangelists, Pastors, and Teachers, and furnished them for their work. To these gifts I owe it, that I am not still dead in trespasses and sins. He ascended up on high to receive the Spirit in his various gifts and graces for men, and to give thereof unto them. He has received, and he has given; yea and he will give, for he will not forsake his people. If he ascended to receive gifts for men, he will not unfaithfully keep what he has received, but will send the comforter to abide with his church for ever.

Upon the whole therefore, when I say, He ascended into heaven, my meaning is, that JESUS CHRIST, the Son

Son of GOD, and Lord of all things, when he had come down from heaven, been made man, suffered death on the cross, and risen from the dead, did by an actual removal go up to heaven in his whole person GOD and MAN; and by so doing, being the representative of believers, did prepare and take possession of a place for them there, both leading captive all their enemies, and also receiving for them the Holy Ghost to provide them with all needful gifts and graces, till he come and take them to himself.

But while I thus profess my belief of an exalted Redeemer, by no means could I think that I sincerely believed he was ascended for these purposes, unless I could find the influence of my belief upon my heart and in my life. And therefore in conformity with these glorious ends of CHRIST's ascension, I declare,

First, That it is my desire and endeavour to have my conversation in heaven, whither he is *gone to prepare a place* for his people. Thither in heart and mind would I ascend with him, and continually dwell, as a citizen of that blessed place. I would accustom myself to dwell upon the glory of heaven in my thoughts and meditations, till I found myself more in love with the same, waiting and desiring to be dissolved and to be with CHRIST. By faith I would acquaint myself with what the glorified saints have the full sight and enjoyment of, the glory of JESUS, and would behold as I could the glory which the Father hath given him. I would have my heart increasingly longing after and satisfied with the mansions of the city above, to which JESUS is gone, and where he continually is; I would not be content with a cold, unanimated,

unanimated, dry acknowledgment of my Saviour's being aſcended up to his glory. Nor, like the world of unbelievers, talk of an aſcended JESUS, and a heavenly kingdom, while my heart and proſpects and purſuits are fixed down to earth. Fond miſtake! What? ye ſons and daughters of pleaſure, whoſe deſires day and night are carried out after company and entertainment, according to that peculiarity which you reliſh and delight in, will you perſuade yourſelves that you believe CHRIST aſcended into heaven to prepare a place for you? Can you really think you believe it, when that place has not the leaſt deſire of your hearts, when ye conſtantly forget it, and it does not prevail with you to take one ſtep for the obtaining it? Will the worldling, who is thinking within himſelf what ſhall I do, becauſe I have no room where to beſtow my fruits? This will I do. I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I beſtow all my fruits, and my goods. And I will ſay to my ſoul, Soul, thou haſt much goods laid up for many years; take thine eaſe, eat, drink, and be merry: will this man imagine, or will his vain neighbour, that is labouring to build ſome *Babel* to get him a name, imagine with him, that they ſtedfaſtly believe CHRIST is aſcended to take poſſeſſion of a kingdom, that cannot be moved, in heaven for us poor mortal ſinners? I would have my heart ſo fixed on the heavenly inheritance, as not only to be diſengaged from the vain proſpects of theſe children of the world, but that all things below ſhould be indifferent to me. I would be in the temper of a man upon a deſolate iſland, who was waiting for the veſſel

he saw at a distance, that was coming to convey him to a land of plenty and happiness, where he wishes to be.

Secondly, Did JESUS ascend into heaven, leading captivity captive? Did he make it evident that his atonement had satisfied the curse of the law, by his going up from all the power of Death, Satan, and Hell? Believing this, it is my duty, and shall be my endeavour, to rejoice over all these vanquished enemies. I would be saying to my accusing Conscience, Knowest thou not that the demands of the law are satisfied? To Death, where is thy dart? Shall I fear thee, whom JESUS has led vanquished in his ascent from thy dominions into heaven? To Satan I would say in all his assaults, where is thy power? Have not I seen thee bound in chains? Rage if thou wilt, thou canst not hurt me. And to Hell I would say, terrible as thou art in thy everlasting flames, thou canst not affright me. Thee also I have seen vanquished. I have nothing to fear from thee, if I prove faithful to my Lord. In the face of all these mine enemies I would stand resolved. Though I can bring my Redeemer little glory any other way, yet I would not dishonour him by unbelief, as if he had not led all these mine enemies captive when he ascended up on high. I would be strong in faith, that I might advance in love, and, disengaged from every slavish fear, might serve my master chearfully in all my conversation. Believing the triumphs of my Redeemer, I would be stedfast against the fear of these potent enemies; yet careful that my belief in the exalted JESUS wrought in me love and desire, I would guard against pre-

presumption. Believing that JESUS is ascended to heaven, in heart and mind I would ascend with him, and be raised above the gnawings of despair, and preserve myself safe from the greater danger of security. Does it become one, whose surety is ascended into heaven, either to harbour earthly affections, or to fear vanquished enemies? The one and the other are a disgrace to the profession of a Christian. Grace enabling me, I will not stop in low attainments. I will stedfastly look up into heaven after JESUS ascended thither, till I can say, Lord, my heart is with thee. And then I will boldly say to Conscience, Death, Satan, and Hell, I fear you not.

Lastly, Ascending up on high did he receive gifts for men to bestow them on his people? And was the design of them that GOD might dwell among us, through the knowledge and love of the truth? Then knowing what these gifts are, it is my desire and shall be my endeavour to use them answerably to the purpose of their vouchsafement. The Apostle has taught me to understand by these gifts a ministry furnished with the knowledge of the Gospel, able to teach, and disposed to do so: whoever is not thus prepared, is not provided by CHRIST for the ministry, does but invade the office by undertaking it, and can do nothing to the edification of the church. But such a qualified ministry is from the Lord. *He gave gifts unto men. He gave some Apostles; and some Prophets; and some Evangelists; and some Pastors and Teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.* Seeing therefore this ministry to be what my Lord

has received and given, and seeing it is principally by means thereof that GOD dwells among us, through the knowledge and love of the truth hereby wrought in us, I think it my duty to reverence it as his gift, to attend upon it as his ordinance, and to endeavour that it may promote my edification. I will not turn my back upon it, as if I might profit as well or better without it; this were to think meanly of the gift of CHRIST. I will not attend upon it in curiosity, losing sight of the gift in the qualifications of the man, whatever they be. Neither will I lightly let slip what the Lord by this method teaches me, and thereby disgrace the ascension of CHRIST to receive and give gifts unto men. I will keep in memory that ministers in themselves are but earthen vessels, that I may not think highly of the men; yet I will remember, that, when they are duly qualified and disposed, they are CHRIST's gift, that I may not think meanly of their office. I will not glory in men, for all things are for the sake of the church; but will account them servants of CHRIST, and stewards of the mysteries of GOD. My eye shall be upon them as the gift of CHRIST, and I will bear it in my remembrance that by their ministrations it is GOD who has ordained that I should be instructed and edified; for he has instituted no other. I will pray my ascended Lord that he will bless them with all increase of knowledge and grace, and that he will bestow such gifts on all the churches of the saints. I know what glorious things were done, when soon after his ascension CHRIST vouchsafed his gifts to the Apostles and others. I know his hand is not shortened, and that

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the reſidue of the Spirit dwelleth in him; wherefore I will pray the Lord of the harveſt that he will ſend forth labourers into his harveſt.

You ſee now the practical influence of CHRIST's aſcenſion into heaven. The laſt circumſtance of which very ſeaſonably leads us to the ſolemn tranſaction of this *Ember-week*. We may judge of the regard we have for the gifts CHRIST received when he aſcended up on high, by the importunity of our prayers that he will richly qualify and duly diſpoſe thoſe who are offering themſelves to the work of the miniſtry. Should we not have this upon our hearts, could we really deſire that GOD might dwell among us? Should we forbear to pray the Lord of the harveſt, would there be any ground of perſuaſion that we believe either that CHRIST received ſuch gifts or gives them unto men; or that we had the leaſt concern for the edification of others or even of ourſelves? Faith is but a name, if it be not brought into practice. And if it be real, why ſhould it not influence us in this reſpect as well as any other? Thoſe of you, who are unacquainted with true faith, will go away and forget, nor will JESUS hear any prayers from you on the preſent intereſting occaſion. Believers will hear, be reproved, and I truſt quickened to pray that the Lord will even now ſpeak the word, that great may be the number of evangelical preachers.

The Collect for the *Aſcenſion-day* will properly conclude this diſcourſe:—*Grant, we beſeech thee, Almighty God, that like as we do believe thy only-begotten Son our Lord Jeſus Chriſt to have aſcended into the heavens; ſo we may alſo in heart and mind thither aſcend, and with*

him continually dwell, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. Amen.

SERMON XXIV.

ACTS xvi. 30, 31.

What must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.

HAVING considered and improved our Lord's ascension into heaven, we proceed to his session; *He sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty.*

The title *Almighty* is ascribed to the Father in the first article of the Creed as well as in the present. *Here* it intends the absolute *power* of GOD, whereby he doth all things, can do what he pleases, and is above all possibility of being hindered in the execution of his purposes. *There* it regarded his absolute *Dominion* over all things as an universal and eternal Sovereign.

To be *on the right hand* of GOD the Father Almighty, or on the right hand of power, (since GOD has not indeed hands) must regard the station unto which CHRIST is exalted, and express the singular honour and glory he is advanced unto as Mediator, the possession of universal dominion as Lord of all things in his mediatorial capacity, and his own most perfect and inconceivable blessedness.

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And whereas he is said to *sit* on the right hand of the Father, this has no reference to his bodily posture, for the first Martyr saw him *standing on the right hand of God*, but may imply his perpetual life and settled unalterable continuance in his exalted state, or more properly the authoritative administration of that power unto which he is exalted, and whereof he is put in possession.

In this exalted station our professor now considers him, who in the days of his flesh was the man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and having before declared his belief that JESUS had done all things while on earth, which either the glory of GOD or the salvation of sinners required of him in that state of humiliation, is now, in the merit of what he had done here below, possessed of all power in heaven, and employing it all in the most effectual manner to the same glorious ends. But particularly he intends to say,

First, I believe CHRIST to be at the right hand of GOD in the present and perpetual administration of his *prophetical* office. While he was upon earth his word was with power, but the full power of that word was reserved to his being made head over all things to his church. Then the partition wall being broken down which separated between *Jews* and *Gentiles*, he would *teach all nations*. This he has done and doth. He began with the *Jews* at the feast of *Pentecost*, and would teach them the way of life in believing that he was the CHRIST, the Son of GOD. I hear the poor fisherman open his mouth, and see the hearts of thousands bending before the testimony he gave, that JESUS,

that very JESUS *whom they had crucified, was made of God Lord and Christ:* What? Was it the word or wisdom of *Peter* that wrought thus powerfully upon the hearts of so many hearers, bent with peculiar opposition against the truths which they received? Or was this an effect arising in a way of mere persuasion and evidence from the miracle of tongues which stared them in the face? Both words and works alike powerful they had repeatedly enjoyed under CHRIST's ministry without any such issue. What then was the cause? I see and own it. JESUS was now glorified; therefore the Holy Ghost was given. That gift he had now received of the Father, and now he began to shed abroad the same in a measure and manner never before known. He taught the hearts of his people by sending to them the light, not of his word only, but of his Holy Spirit. In the strength of this influence the word ran. Speedily the *sound of it went it out as it were into all lands, and believers were every where added to the Lord. The prince of this world was cast out* of his dominion, which he had usurped, and was forced to yield up the hearts of his captives to the more mighty JESUS. Thus the great Prophet of the church taught with power as soon as he was exalted to the right hand of GOD. Nor from that time to this day has he forgotten his office. In every age he has taught the hearts of his people. In this age he teaches all that ever come to know and love the truth. I see him doing it by multitudes. While his faithful messengers are declaring *the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven*, he is with them giving unto many hearts to understand them. He makes the word effectual, being present by the Spirit, though in person

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he be in heaven. Sleeping sinners awake, they arise from the dead, he gives them life. Yes, they live, they are turned from their former evil works, they live a divine life, they *shine as lights in the world*, he *leads them into all necessary truth*, he makes *their path as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day*. They have no need of an earthly infallible interpreter of the word of GOD, for he himself instructs them all therein from the least even unto the greatest in their use of his own institutions. I own him for my Prophet, I desire myself to *call no man on earth master*, and I would leave others to be taught by him also. I will read, hear, and meditate upon his word, which he has caused to be written for my instruction, and will pray and wait for his Spirit to guide me into all saving truth. I am told by the mouth of St. *John*, that the people of GOD *have received an unction from the Holy One*, who sits on the right hand of GOD, and dispenses his gifts and graces to the church; and I am farther informed, that 'this anointing abideth in them, and teacheth them of all things, so that they need not that any man teach them' the first principles of Christianity, much less step into the place of the Spirit for their farther information in revealed truths. This unction I trust I have received, for surely from the heart I have been enabled to *confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh*; I confess him to be my Saviour, I confess him to be the Son of GOD, I confess him to have come in the flesh to die for the ungodly, I confess that herein is all my salvation. Having therefore this unction from him the Holy One abiding in me, I shall hereby both *know every spirit whether it be of God*, and

in these evil days of man's wisdom most easily be assured that *he that denieth the Father* as the Father, *and the Son* as the Son, *is Antichrist*, denying the Son to be the only-begotten of the Father, and having consequently no true knowledge of the Father, nor interest in him; and also keeping under its influence I shall be built up in my most holy faith, receiving constant additions of light and grace, and being furnished with higher qualifications for the kingdom of glory, through the continual care and teaching of my great Prophet who sits at the right hand of the throne.

Secondly, As I believe CHRIST to be on the right hand of GOD in the exercise of his prophetical, so also of his *priestly* office. In the merit of his atonement he is *gone up into heaven, and appears in the presence of God for us*. He presents his crucified body there in the behalf of his people. No sooner was he sat down on the right hand of GOD, than he obtained their perfect reconciliation, and the gift of the Holy Ghost to bless them with. Wherefore, when I consider myself as I am covered with innumerable transgressions, and altogether guilty before GOD, I look up and see my crucified LORD presenting his sacrifice on the behalf of sinners before the throne; I cry out and say, *Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us*. When I am carried away by the force of temptation, and from the daily lamented corruption of my nature am surprised into sin, and my heart is vexed within me, and there is no rest in my bones by reason of my transgression, then I humbly get me to my LORD, look up to heaven, and say to my soul,

ſoul, *If any man ſin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jeſus Chriſt the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our ſins.* When I would approach GOD, and my ſoul is ready to draw back from his preſence in the thought of his great Majeſty and Holineſs, and of my unworthineſs, as if it were preſumption in me to look up unto this *holy Lord God*; and when I am ſenſible how low, unbecoming, and full of ſin my very beſt addreſſes are, then I look to the right hand of the throne, and hear this encouraging account of my LORD's interceſſion recorded in the book of *Revelations*, and grow confident that GOD will not caſt out my prayer; *And another angel came, and ſtood at the altar, having a golden cenſer; and there was given unto him much incenſe, that he ſhould offer it up with the prayers of all ſaints, upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the ſmoke of the incenſe, which came with the prayers of the ſaints, aſcended up before God out of the angel's hand.* When with all my ſins and infirmities about me, threatned by the law, and condemned by my own conſcience, I nevertheleſs find in my ſoul a peace in believing, which alſo, eſpecially under trials and afflictions, grows up to joy in the Holy Ghoſt, I remember the words of my LORD, *If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will ſend him unto you*; and acknowledge his effectual advocacy, while I find that *we have not received the ſpirit of bondage again to fear; but we have received the ſpirit of adoption, whereby we cry, abba, Father.* While I find my heart inclined and ſtirred up to mourn over ſin before GOD, to cry importunately for deliverance from the body of ſin dwelling in me, to ſue continuedly for mercy as for my life,

and for grace to love GOD in my own ſoul, and to others that they may love him alſo; while I find my ſpirit thus in conformity with the word of GOD, I have a joyful teſtimony that CHRIST intercedeth at the right hand of GOD, yea that even for me he maketh interceſſion. What I experience in myſelf is the fruit and proof of his interceding even for me. The Spirit thus given is the effect of his interceſſion, and the proof of my intereſt therein. In ſuch caſe *The Spirit helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we ſhould pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itſelf maketh interceſſion for us with groanings that cannot be uttered.* And he that ſearcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, becauſe he maketh interceſſion for the ſaints according to the will of GOD.

All theſe benefits I ſee ariſing unto me through the interceſſion of CHRIST, whoſe obedience unto death was ſo infinitely pleaſing to the Father, that he had only to *will* all theſe things for his people and they are done; their perſons are accepted, their daily miſcarriages pardoned, their prayers heard, their ſouls comforted, their hearts quickened by the Holy Ghoſt to a penitent, humble, and heavenly temper. Well might the Apoſtle encourage us in theſe views of CHRIST's ſeſſion at the right hand of GOD; *Seeing then that we have a great High-Prieſt, that is paſſed into the heavens, Jeſus the Son of God, let us hold faſt our profeſſion. For we have not an High-Prieſt which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without ſin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.* I remark and treaſure up

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the encouraging words, *Obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.* Can I want more? Yet mercy and grace are the sure fruits of CHRIST's intercession to all that believe. For these I am encouraged to come boldly. Even so, LORD, I come to obtain this mercy, and find this needed grace, that I may hold fast my profession. In all my wants of either, it is my desire to look up to thee, seated on the right hand of the Majesty on high in the character of Mediator, and therein of representative of thy people. I am indeed a guilty creature, and most unworthy in all I do, I am beset with enemies as well as sins; but thou livest for ever making intercession for us, and through thy advocacy there is mercy to cover my sin, and grace to help my weakness. Blessed LORD, whatever way I turn my thoughts, *thou makest me to hear of joy and gladness.* Thou art exemplifying to thy people what thou prayedst for them while thou wast on earth; and we are sure that of all which thou didst speak in thy prayer for us, not one word shall fall to the ground, till thou hast fulfilled the desire of thy heart, which thou didst express in words from thy lips more precious to my soul than thousands of gold and silver: *Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me.*

But,

Thirdly, I believe JESUS to be on the right hand of GOD as a *King* also. In this sense I principally understand his session at GOD's right hand. There I acknowledge him as *Lord of all.* Such he was from eternity by right of nature, as GOD: such he was by right of creation, inasmuch as *All things were made by him,*

him, and without him was not any thing made that was made; and such he was by office when he took up the mediatorial character; yet in that quality he was not invested with the administration of all power but in consequence of his sacrifice; and therefore though he shewed his dominion over men and things as occasion offered in the days of his flesh, yet he was not solemnly inaugurated and seated in his kingdom till his ascent into heaven, when in consideration of his obedience unto death, *God gave him a name, which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.* There I see him seated on his throne, not only in the power but in the exercise of universal dominion. *The Lord said unto my Lord*, said *David* in the word of prophetic faith, *Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. David*'s Lord, and yet his Son. What the *Scribes* could not comprehend is my unspeakable joy. *David*'s Son; therefore man like myself: and *David*'s Lord, therefore the Son of GOD. To him GOD said, *Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.* The grant is large as my wishes, for all his enemies are mine, and all my enemies are his. He reigns to restrain the rage of men, the fury of Satan, the malignity of corruption. Till the opposition of men, Satan and sin shall cease, he shall sit on his throne. But is this all? Has the exalted JESUS no subjects? Or does he forget these in the administration of his government? No, for he is *made head over all things to his church*, for their protection,

tection, safety, and happiness. He reigns to receive all that make their submission, to confer upon them the free and full reconciliation, which he purchased with his blood. *On earth he had power to forgive sins*, and surely that power is not lessened since he is exalted to the right hand of the throne of GOD. He reigns to govern his people, not *with a rod of iron*, but with a gracious sceptre, which he has given them hearts to love, and unto which he is continually bringing them into a more willing and intire subjection. He reigns to protect them against all their enemies, and to make all things work together for their good. Thus he reigns a terror to his enemies, but what a blessing to his friends! and thus he shall reign till all things be put under him; till upon the great day of his appearing devils and sinners shall be shut up in the eternal prison of hell; till saints shall be made perfect in holiness, raised up immortal, incorruptible, and glorious; and sin and death, the last enemy, shall in regard of them be destroyed for ever. Then, *When all things shall be put under him, he shall render up the* mediatorial *kingdom unto the Father*, all the ends for which he received it being fully answered, and himself shall reign God-man for ever and ever, and his happy people with him.

All this I stedfastly believe concerning the kingdom in heaven of my exalted LORD, when I profess my faith in him as for ever sat down at the right hand of GOD. But then I would be understood to say this with an application of his kingdom to myself, owning him to be *my* Lord by submitting myself to his govern-

ment, and leaning confidently on his protection against my every enemy, and all of them together.

First, I do hereby declare that I willingly *submit* myself to his divine *government* and direction. And when I say this, my meaning is, that I desire without reserve to be conformed to his *words* or written law in spirit, soul, and body; so that I may not be of the number of those, who *say unto him, Lord, Lord, but do not the things which he says*, disgracing his Majesty by pretending to be his servants: that to the end of my being made conformable to his will I do desire to yield myself unto the guidance and discipline of his *Spirit*, in an entire dependence on his operations, in a regardful attention and submission to his sacred motions, and in a reverential acquiescence under all his dispensations to my soul; whether it be fit that I shall walk in darkness or in the light of GOD's countenance, as to his infinite wisdom, love, and goodness shall seem fit: and finally, that for the purposes of his glory and of my sanctification, I do desire to be subject to the direction of his *providence*, to have the cross laid upon me in manner, measure, and continuance as he pleases; humbly and heartily beseeching him that, however heavy it may be, he will enable me to bear it, so that I may not by withdrawing from it when it presses hard and is heavy (which I am assured it will never be without some singular occasion) defeat the grandest designs of his glory by me, and the most signal means of advantaging my soul. Not thus disposed, could I say with a good conscience that I submit myself as a subject of his spiritual kingdom to his direction and will? Could I call him Lord in sincerity of heart? Could he

get

get any glory by me, or I any benefit from his kingdom? Or can I once think he will own me for one of his when he shall come in the clouds of heaven? But blessed be GOD, even thus I desire to submit to his government, in a conformity with his will, submission to his grace, and acquiescence in his providence. And,

Secondly, I declare farther that in yielding myself thus to his government, I desire confidently to *depend* upon the *protection* of the same. I would be always in the spirit of the Apostle, and say continually and in every case, *I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.* I desire that I may never dishonour him in my heart or conduct by mistrusting his power, as if any thing were too hard for him; or his care, as though he should be forgetful of me. Confident in his royal authority to pardon, I would never yield to the accusations of an evil conscience, while I was suing for his mercy. Confident in his sufficiency and love to strengthen my weakness I would never stagger at the approach of a trial or faint in the endurance of it, but boldly hold up my head in the assurance that *he will not suffer me to be tempted above that I am able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that I may be able to bear it.* Confident in his power to sanctify me wholly, I would not sinfully doubt, though my lusts should be like lions roaring against and threatening to devour me; though they were never so old and obstinate; though the time for their mortification were never so short; though it were past all my comprehension how I could possibly

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be made perfect in holiness; while yet I was sensible that no unholy thing can enter heaven. Confident in his power to protect me against the arts of the devil, I would never decline any duty from an apprehension that Satan will lie in wait to turn it into a snare to my soul; and should the fiend at any time beset me with horrible suggestions, and thrust into my mind black speeches well befitting his hellish mouth, I would neither fear nor tremble, but in the name of my LORD boldly resist him, yea and in this respect scorn and despise him. Confident in his power to receive my departing spirit to himself, though I know not the world of spirits, though I have never tried the invisible state, I would joyfully surrender it up whenever it is his pleasure; and confident in his power to raise my body from the dust, I would chearfully at his call lay down this tabernacle: in the hour of death I would not distrust and disgrace my LORD's protection, but say to death, "Welcome, thou last enemy! where, what is become of thy sting?" Finally, from this present moment till that hour come, I would not doubt or fear, though I should *dwell among scorpions*, though I should have to contend day by day with those *that are set on fire* by the rage and malice of their hearts, *whose teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword*; though my habitation were with such as *every day wrested my words, all their thoughts being against me for evil, who should gather themselves together, and hide themselves, and mark my steps while they waited for my soul.* Though my trials from an evil world were without interruption and of never so long continuance, so that I should grow up to gray hairs under them,

them, yet ſtill would I be confident in my maſter's care, nor ſo much as once ſay with *David*, *I ſhall periſh one day by the hand of Saul.*

Thus confident I would always be in the protection of my King who ſitteth on the right hand of GOD. I would, but I too often do not. There is an evil heart of unbelief lurking within me. This I have great cauſe to fear will betray me. It muſt do ſo when I forget who ſits on the right hand of GOD, and why he ſits in that glorious ſtation. When the heavens are opened unto my faith, and I ſee JESUS ſitting on the right hand of GOD, then I can do all things. But alas, how much too apt am I to loſe that quickening, ſtrengthening ſight, in the cares and engagements of the world! then how ready to diſgrace my LORD by ſinful miſgivings, and ſhameful compliances in the fear of preſent evil. Then every approaching trial ſtaggers me, then I have no heart to hold out againſt corruptions, then the cunning and rage of Satan grow formidable, then death looks dreadful, then I tremble at the faces, the frowns, the reproaches of an evil world. This I know from experience, that if I walk not by faith, I have power for nothing; and therefore while I thus declare my honeſt deſires, my cry is, *Lord, increaſe my faith.*

You ſee now ſomewhat of that which is contained in theſe words of our Creed, *He ſitteth on the right hand of God, the Father Almighty.* You ſee, I am perſuaded, that a real belief of his doing ſo implies a certain ſpirituality of temper, to which I could moſt earneſtly wiſh none here preſent were ſtrangers. But, Sirs, what correſpondence have you in your ſouls with

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this exalted Prophet, Advocate, and King? I may be free to ask you such a question, because ye are come here under the name of his people. Yet I would much rather ye would ask yourselves what passes in your own hearts between you and him that sitteth on the right hand of GOD: whether any thing of what you have heard be a matter of your experience; whether in this manner ye believe he is alive in heaven; whether ye have any practical regard to him there as teaching, interceding for, governing and protecting his church; whether your hearts go up to him with that frequency and fervency which may reasonably persuade you that you really believe in him as sat down at the right hand of GOD for these purposes. I say, it would be very reasonable you should make such inquiry, whether this faith be in you or not? But since I fear many of you will not bestow on your souls so much as the pains of this inquiry, I will ask this very plain question, When did you last think where CHRIST was, whether in heaven or on earth? Have you thought of his being on the right hand of GOD this day, or yesterday, or the day before, or the week past, or the last Lord's-day, or when? What say you in answer? Ah, I know what your heart is saying, "Truly I cannot tell when I thought about it, it is the least in my thoughts." And if so, I need not add what your conscience is saying farther, "That you have all to begin for your soul." Well, I wish then I could see you make a beginning. Will you now go home, and consider what a case you are in, and set yourself to call on GOD for his grace to shew you the full truth of your condition? No, I fear from what I

have

have hitherto seen you will not. The devil will not suffer you. There will be company or business in the way. Satan will hinder you by some means or other. Ah! Sirs, how do we trifle with our souls! were we to deal thus with our estates, we should be deemed fools or madmen. LORD awaken us out of our sleep that we perish not.

SERMON XXV.

ACTS xvi. 30, 31.

What must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.

WE left our professor comforting himself in the belief of his Saviour's sitting on the right hand of GOD; and are now to consider him as he rejoices in the expectation of CHRIST's coming the second time to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe that he, who died for our sins, is gone away into heaven to prepare a place for his people; from thence I am expecting him to come again with power and great glory, to receive them unto himself, that they may be with him where he is: and in the mean time I see him sitting on the right hand of GOD to prepare them for the place which he has prepared for them; by teaching them from thence, and leading them

them into all truth as their exalted *Prophet*; by sending down upon them the comforting Spirit as their great *High Priest* and *Intercessor*, in the power of which Spirit they come unto GOD with boldness by him, and ask every thing of him as their Father; and by both sanctifying their hearts by his grace through the co-operation of his providence into a growing conformity with that holiness, the measure of which is revealed in the Scriptures; and also defending, protecting, and supporting them from, and against their enemies; and causing every instance of opposition raised against them to work for their good, as their 'sovereign Lord and King.' Confident in his power, care, and love, thus to keep my soul against that day of his coming, I look forward to it with expectation, and express my faith and hope, saying, 'From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.'

What the *dead* are every one knows; even all that ever have died, or shall die, from the first to the last day. Yet whenever the LORD comes, there will be a generation covering the face of the earth, as it is now. These are the *quick* or living, here intended, who shall not die but be changed, and together with the dead appear before the judgment-seat of CHRIST.

Nothing is more plainly declared in Scripture than that there shall be a judgment, before which all men shall appear. Nor is the person, who shall sit in the judgment-seat, less explicitly assured to be JESUS CHRIST. But in what sort this coming of CHRIST to judgment stands here as an article of Christian faith, and what the person making profession of his Christian faith intends

tends hereby, come now to be diſtinctly explained. His meaning is,

Firſt, I do hereby declare my ſtedfaſt belief, that JESUS CHRIST, who was once crucified, but now liveth at the right hand of GOD, and no other but he, ſhall come to judge the quick and the dead. Taught by the Scriptures of GOD I believe this. Without them I might indeed have ſuppoſed, (GOD having kept up through the world ſuch an opinion) that there would be a judgment hereafter, wherein all the diſorder ſubſiſting in this world ſo evidently lying in wickedneſs ſhould be rectified; the myſterious ways of providence cleared up and vindicated; the glory of GOD's government aſſerted and maintained; and every man be treated in a manner ſuited to his real character and conduct. But that this work, ſo manifeſtly above the reach of any creature, becauſe only capable of being tranſacted by omniſcience and omnipotence, ſhould be effected by one in our nature, I could not in the leaſt meaſure have ſuſpected, unleſs the Scriptures of GOD had revealed it unto me. Yet now that GOD has made it known, that he will *judge the world in righteouſneſs by that Man whom he hath ordained, and hath given aſſurance thereof unto all men, in that he hath raiſed him from the dead*, I ſee hereby an honour put upon my once deſpiſed maſter wherein I greatly rejoice; perceive with unſpeakable comfort that my judgment ſhall be according to the gracious terms of his Goſpel; and am perfectly ſatisfied that he who loved me unto the death will deal with me in a correſponding tenderneſs, not diſowning my poor ſervices becauſe they have been unworthy of him; and paſſing by my lamented im-

perfections and sins. Wherefore being apprised from the very person of the Judge of the nature of the judgment, I do,

Secondly, Make this my profession of his coming to judge the quick and the dead with confidence therein. Was there not a Mediator between GOD and man; was I to be judged absolutely according to my works, nothing could be expected but condemnation and destruction; for in that case no flesh living could be justified, *all having sinned, and come short of the glory of God*, and therefore must expect that he would glorify himself in the universal punishment of us all. But GOD in this *judgeth no man who believeth in Jesus, but hath committed all judgment to the Son*, and that for this reason, *because*, having assumed the mediatorial character, though he is GOD, yet *he is* also *the Son of man*. Knowing therefore the person of my Judge, I am assured of the measure of my judgment, that it shall be such as I have confidence I shall be able to answer. My sins will not be my destruction, because my Judge once died for the ungodly; and in the sense of my ungodliness and misery I have, upon his invitation, betaken myself to him, who tells me now with his own mouth, *That he that cometh unto him he will in no wise cast out*; and I have no suspicion that he will not make good at last what he now so graciously declares. I have nothing to fear from my manifold sins, being under this protection, and partaking of the benefits of this blood which cleanseth from all sins, provided I shall be able to make it appear that this my faith has been alive, and fruitful of good works. My works must appear to justify my faith: in the want of them I should be found

found to have no faith in me. But I have works to shew; and these such as I know beforehand he will own, because he has told me so already in his holy word. I have been made to understand, that *nothing availeth* now, or will be made any account of in the day of the Lord, *but faith which worketh by love*, by real love to him, and to his people for his sake. Now with all my unbelief, pride, covetousness, shame, cowardice, and every accursed lust that wars in my members, I have certainly works of love to produce towards him and his people. When he shall ask me, "Hast thou loved me? I shall be able to answer, *Lord, thou knowest all things*, thou knowest thou didst in my days upon earth reveal thyself to my sin-burdened soul, and cause me to *behold thy glory as the Only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth*, and thereby win my soul to thee, and work in me by thy power to make me love thee; *thou knowest that I loved thee.* Yea, Lord, and thou knowest, how thou didst overcome all my prejudices against thee, till I saw thee the *fairest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely.* I am ashamed to speak of any testimonies of my love, but they were thy work, defiled and defaced as it was in every instance by my abominable corruption and sinfulness; and therefore to thy praise I will make mention, how thou didst possess me with a zeal for thy name, and enable me to confess it before men, in defiance of my own native cowardice to own myself in the midst of reproach to be thy servant, and to follow thy words, instead of the custom of the world, as the rule of my actions. Thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I loved *thee*, though alas, with an unequal love; and

thy interests, but with too cold a heart. I did not yield myself, from the day that I knew thee, to the service of sin and Satan, but professed myself to be, and in some imperfect measure made that profession good through thy grace, thy servant, even thine only. —And since thou requirest a yet farther and peculiar testimony of my having loved thee, by demanding of me the proofs of my having loved thy people, those that professed thy name, and followed thy steps, for thy sake; behold, Lord, didst thou not give me an heart to delight in these thy saints, here upon thy right hand, while they were upon earth? Thy love towards me constrained me to love them. Surely I could not forbear giving a cup of water to any of them, as bearing the name, and manifesting the character of thy disciples. Thou hadst said to *Peter*, If thou *lovest me, feed my sheep*; and hast declared before, that what offices of love were done to any of thy brethren, as thou didst condescend to call them, thou wouldst regard them as done to thyself; yea, thou hast said, that *whosoever received one of thy children in thy name, received thee.* Now, Lord, all these things didst thou enable me to do, in some imperfect measure. I received, and owned thy children for thy sake, while, because of their faithfulness to thee, the world was casting out their name as evil. Some little offices of love I tendered them. *I fed them, or gave them drink, or clothed them, or took them into my house, or visited them if they were sick or in prison.* Neither was I utterly wanting to minister to their bodies in other respects, or to their souls, according to my gifts or abilities. It was upon my heart not to offend them,

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and I was not utterly without regard to my conduct, that it ſhould not be unto them an occaſion of falling. But, righteous Judge, I do not ſtand before thee in the merit of any of theſe things. I dare not in any ſuch view ſpeak of my love to thee or thy people. I ſee it unſuitable, low, worthleſs, nothing. Now it was plainly to have been all thy work, whatever of it there was, but to have been hindered, weakened, debaſed by my exceeding ſelfiſhneſs; and I am aſtoniſhed at thy miraculous power that any thing like love ſhould ever have ſubſiſted in my depraved heart, or appeared in my conduct. Lo, in the merit of thy blood and righteouſneſs I ſtand here before thee. This is all my ſalvation this day. I will mention no other. But ſince thou wilt; and haſt reſpect in mercy to my poor ſervices, behold I render back all the glory of them to thee, who didſt work them in me; and as for myſelf, I will ſtand for ever before thee with this one acknowledgment upon my heart and tongue, Sinful and unprofitable I ſtand here ſaved by grace." —Having therefore boldneſs to appeal thus to the Judge of all the earth, knowing that my Judge is my Saviour, under whoſe healing wings I have taken refuge from the avenging arm of juſtice, knowing that my judgment will paſs according to the works of faith, and not of the law, and having the teſtimony of my conſcience that CHRIST dwelleth in me by the ſpirit of love which he hath given me, I have boldneſs in the expectation of his coming, and do ſay, with confidence of my intereſt therein, The Lord is at hand to judge the quick and the dead.— Wherefore,

Thirdly, Having this confidence in respect of judgment, I mean to express also my hope, expectation, and waiting desire of that day. I regard it as the day of my Lord's eminent triumph, when he shall come in the glory of the Father, with great power and unequalled majesty, attended by the hosts of heaven, and all nature bowing before him; when by the working of his mighty power the dead shall arise from the various distributions of their dust. And, with the assembled living, stand, a vast multitude which no man can number, before his seat, to own and honour, whether willingly or not, the once despised Lamb; when the fallen angels too shall be brought up to adorn his appearance, and receive their final doom from his mouth; when he shall be admired in all them that believe, because of the adorable work he shall have wrought for them and in them, and upon such as would not obey his gospel he shall get himself glory infinitely surpassing that when he destroyed so many of his haughty enemies in the depths of the *Red Sea*; when every eye shall see him, and they that pierced him shall own, that he is no other than the once crucified JESUS; when by his royal word he shall pronounce the sentences never to be recalled; by his omnipotency shut up the damned in the caverns of hell for a miserable eternity; and bid a new heaven and earth to come forth furnished and provided with every circumstance of greatness, glory and beauty, to receive for ever his happy saints. Can I think of this day so honourable to him whom my soul loveth, without longing and wishing for its appearance? And when I consider that his people shall partake with him

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in the glories of that day, hearing his voice, shall come forth victorious over death the last enemy, decked in all the brightness, strength, and glory of a spiritual Body, with their own eyes behold their Lord avenging himself upon his enemies and theirs by an utter destruction; and hear him say to them those ravishing words never to be recalled, *Come, ye blessed of my Father:* can I do other than say, *Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly?* Surely I would rejoice to see, and be for ever with the Lord; to behold all his beauty as the express image of the Father's person; to contemplate with endless and insatiable transport the glory which the Father has given him; to make my acknowledgment in the praises of heaven among the multitude which no man can number, as saved, for ever saved by his love and care, his power and grace. What? when the least beam of his glory now let in upon my soul turns my earth into heaven, and makes me cry out with *Peter*, It is good for us to be here, can I wish him to delay his coming? When, remaining in this vale of misery I groan under corruption, and am burdened with a corruptible body, can I say, This is better, than to be fashioned in soul and body like unto the Lord? When I find here nothing but vanity, and vexation of spirit, shall I be averse to the Lord's coming to change my sorrows into joy unspeakable and full of glory? Here beset as I am with enemies, would I not long for that blessed day when I shall see them again no more for ever? And would I not be glad to be taken from a world lying in wickedness into the new heavens and earth wherein dwelleth righteousness? I know that my Redeemer liveth, I know that

he shall stand at the latter day on the earth; I have humble confidence that he will own me among the children; and shall I, like those who know no better joys than this world can afford them, are ignorant of a Redeemer's righteousness, and lie under the conscious guilt of unnumbered and unpardoned sins; shall I like them, cleave to this base life as my all for happiness, and not wait, and wish, and long for the day of my Master's glorious appearance? No, I will not abide in that low measure of faith, which only begets a hope that it may be well when the Lord comes, but knows not what it is *to love the day of his appearance.* My endeavour shall be to be *strong in faith*, and *abounding in hope through the power of the holy Ghost*; *always fruitful in good works*, and *hastening unto the day of the Lord.* Hold out, faith; and come, Lord JESUS. Yet,

Fourthly, When I declare my belief, confidence, and hope concerning the coming of CHRIST, I do therewith also express my purpose and determination to be daily making preparation for his coming. All my belief, confidence, and hope regarding that day, I must needs look upon as delusion, unless the expectation thereof makes me both diligent and persevering in the work of the Lord. For assuredly I could neither believe, nor desire, nor have any interest in the day of the Lord, if the coming of that day did not in such manner abide upon my heart as to engage me unto a continual preparation for it. But I know that the day of the Lord cometh, yea that it cometh as a thief in the night, and therefore it is my desire to be always prepared, that whenever it cometh I may be

found so doing as that my work may be ready. Like the foolish virgins I would not go out to meet the bridegroom not having oil in my lamp, neither with those that were wise would I slumber and sleep, suffer my lamp to burn dimly, and to need trimming when the cry of the bridegroom's coming should reach me. It is my desire and purpose to live always as if I heard that solemn voice sounding continually in my ears, *Awake, ye dead, and come to judgment*; and in this view, not barely to abstain from such things as would bring me to confusion of face before the judgment-seat of CHRIST, but as much as possible even from all such thoughts, cares, and studies as would make me forgetful of the day of the Lord. On the contrary, I would be daily laying up treasures for that day. Every day would I be so meditating upon, and have fixed on my heart the day of judgment, that my faith therein should be more lively, and my hope of it more ardent, and this my faith and hope kindle my love of JESUS and of his people into a brighter flame, to the consuming more and more all selfish, sensual, and earthly ends and mixtures; and to the producing such works of love to him and them, as will be to the increase of praise and glory on that day. I would not have one day or hour go by, wherein the coming of the Lord should be forgotten; nor one thing be brought forth that would not graciously be remembered when I shall stand before the judgment-seat of CHRIST. Every day and hour I would be doing something for judgment, whether by endeavouring after an inward increase of that faith which worketh by love, or by attempting something out-

outwardly for the honour and interests of my Master, for the salvation and present happiness of others, for his sake. Wherever I had been, and whatever I had done, I would be able, on reflection, to trace the footsteps of this expectation to have been in my conduct; and as I grew nearer to that day, I would have this expectation to become more strong, fruitful, and visible in my every action. I would not grow weary nor faint, but endure unto the end in such works as are prepared for me to walk in, hastening still onward to the day of the Lord. To this work I would encourage myself by repeated meditations on the glory of that illustrious day, and perpetually would I ask myself, am I ready? Will this and this, O my soul, retard or promote thy readiness? Will this or this bring thee joy or shame at CHRIST's coming? Thus would I exercise myself in the belief and expectation of the day of the Lord; thus would I do, and be found doing when my summons is brought me by death to appear before the Judge of quick and dead; and in the confidence of my Redeemer's merit and of my interest therein, I would say to death, *Welcome*, and to the day of CHRIST, *Come quickly*.

What has been now set before you is the plain, unquestionable meaning of the point under consideration. What shall we think therefore, if while we own with our mouths that CHRIST shall come from the right hand of GOD to judge the quick and the dead, we have neither confidence in, nor hope of that day, and have not made, nor are making any preparation for that? In such case shall we say, or can we think we have faith in this article? And O how much

much leſs may this be ſaid, if we know in our conſciences that we are abſolutely unprepared for that awful day, and ſo, inſtead of having any confidence therein, are ſatisfied it would be our deſtruction, ſhould it find us as we are, and therefore tremble at the thought of its coming? Alas, alas, my dear friends, how ſhall many of us appear before the judgment-ſeat of CHRIST? for what have we to appear in? Where is our faith in JESUS CHRIST? What fellowſhip is there between him and our ſouls? Where are the works of faith, love to him, and to his people? Have we none of theſe to ſhew? No owning of CHRIST, no following his words, no renouncing the ways of men for his ſake, no love of his people, no giving ſo much as a cup of water to any becauſe they are his? What, in no kind, in no degree ſuch works as he will own? And yet ſhall we receive according to our works? But what can we think of it then, if inſtead of owning CHRIST we have been oppoſing him; inſtead of loving his people we have been hating them for being ſo; inſtead of having any good works to ſhew for ourſelves, CHRIST will find an endleſs number of evil works to ſhew againſt us? What can we think of it, if nothing ſhall appear to have been done by us but what is evil continually; ceaſeleſs, numberleſs works of darkneſs, in thought, word, or deed, as many as the days, hours, and minutes of our lives have been? What? my dear friends, will any one of us be hardy enough to appear under theſe circumſtances before CHRIST's judgment-ſeat, where nothing can be hid, and all will be laid open? Yet remember there we muſt all come,

whether

whether we will or no. GOD will have it so, and who can prevent it? To be plain, I am grieved at heart for many, very many of you, to think how you will make your appearance before CHRIST's judgment-seat. You have no works to speak there for your belonging to CHRIST; I can see none. I see works of various kinds that prove you do not belong to him. If a life of pleasure, idleness, company-keeping, indulgence, drunkenness, pride, covetousness, would recommend you to the favour of the Judge, few would be better received than numbers of you. In the name of GOD, my friends, when you know this moment in your own consciences, that if, as you have been and are, you should be called to judgment, you would be as surely cast into hell, as if you were already scorching in those dreadful flames, why will you live at such a rate? Well, we shall be all before the judgment-seat of CHRIST together. There the controversy between me, persuading you by the terrors of the Lord, and you, determined to abide in your sins, will be decided. There it will appear whether your blood will be upon your own heads for your obstinate impenitency, or upon mine for not giving you warning. CHRIST will certainly either acquit or condemn me on this account; and if I should be acquitted herein, what will become of you? I tremble to think how so many words of mine will be brought up against you on that day. What will you say, what will you answer, how will you excuse yourselves? O sirs, if you will not be prevailed upon, you will with eternal self-reproach curse the day that you knew me, or heard one word from my mouth.

Why,

Why, why, why will you die with ſo aggravated a deſtruction? O think of the judgment; think of it, and you will not be able to hold it out againſt your own ſouls. May the Lord incline you to do ſo; may he cauſe this word to ſink deep into your hearts; may he ſhew you all your danger; and with an outſtretched arm bring you out of the hands of the devil, and tranſlate you into the glorious kingdom of his dear Son, to his own glory, and your unſpeakable happineſs in the day of the appearance of our Lord and Saviour JESUS CHRIST. Even ſo, moſt mighty GOD, and moſt merciful Father, for the ſame JESUS CHRIST's ſake. Amen.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.